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**SECRET MEMOIRS**  
**OF THE**  
**COURT OF BERLIN**  
**UNDER WILLIAM II**  

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**VOLUME III**



# THE HISTORY OF

## THE UNITED STATES







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**Secret Memoirs**

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**THE KAISER AND KAISERIN OF GERMANY**

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**VOLUME III**

**511146**



# **THE KAISER**

***(Continued)***



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

THIS work is of the utmost importance to both the general reader and the student of history. The English edition was published by the London firm of William Heinemann and was confiscated throughout the Kingdom of Prussia. The English edition was expurgated and some 300 pages were omitted from the original manuscript.

This American edition contains the entire original manuscript and in addition Chapters XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV that follow, and which never before appeared in print, thus making a *first complete De Luxe edition* of the only secret history of a court ever published during the lifetime of the reigning monarch.

N. Y. 1913.





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## CHAPTER XX.

It is some years since the Kaiser sent W. K. Vanderbilt, Sr., from his door as an obnoxious intruder and, in the meanwhile, His Majesty has experienced quite a change of heart with respect to Americans. He now dotes on "Yankees," pays assiduous court to all the "lordships of the moneybag"—his own description—and often is at home to them when at home to no one else. The reason? Officially, politics.

With the increase of wealth and the establishment of special privileges in the United States, the government at Washington has become more and more identified, in the eyes of Europe, with the "400." Roosevelt was one of them, and his successor is at least a "near-400."

Accordingly, William argues that attentions shown to American society people will be appreciated in the White House and may aid in Germany's far-reaching schemes covering part of South America.

But, are the "Yankees" of to-day less vulgar and republican than those of October, 1891, when William K's man Hartog pleaded vainly to allow his master a glimpse of the *Neues Palais*?

It may be remembered that:

"Right about face, forward march! March, I say, and march a third time or I will shoot,"—was the Potsdam sentinel's unfeeling answer.

Now the Vanderbilts, Goulds, Goelets and the rest are quite at home at Kiel and other points of imperial *rendezvous*, but let me hasten to add that these particular Americans, when in Europe, are most unrepublican. When in Europe their proud American manhood gives way to a lickspittle spirit that would be amusing, if it were not disgusting.

The Kaiser finds his new friends from beyond the sea at times more subservient even than his own nobles. They agree with all he says, admire all he does, and, besides, help him damn the common rabble. And, of course, they applaud William's tirades against socialists, union labor, etc. That is one point where imperial and republican extremes meet. Here is another:

At bottom William is rather a vulgar person and, though refusing to admit it, is strangely attracted to his likes. You will remember that in years gone by he assured us over and over again that "American moneybags" are the essence of coarseness. This on hearsay evidence.

Now that he is *frère et cochon* with them, his fondness for rich "Yankees"—for poor Americans he has no more use than the Pope when distributing marquis's hats and strawberry bonnets—to-day the Kaiser's love for "Yankee" millionaires is the natural outcome of his "all-highest" inclination.

Besides, William's unpopularity with his equals is steadily increasing and his nervous temperament demanding change of environment all the time, he craves the society of people who, apparently at least, do not notice his mental and physical infirmities and take him at his own value.

The Kaiser, you will remember, frightens his imperial and royal brethren by his readiness to shower them with kisses on the slightest provocation. One kiss won't do, he thinks it necessary to bestow at least three or four to attest his friendship.

Now, a kiss, not to mention a succession of them, from a person said to be infected with cancer, is no desirable commodity. Do you wonder that kings fight shy of William's visits?

Again, the Kaiser has many vulgar habits, among them that of slapping his thighs during conversation. The noise he makes and the motion itself are nerve-racking to some of the older monarchs—the Berlin court marshal's office has a safe full of letters to that effect, suggesting that the Kaiser's attention be drawn to the offensiveness of the habit. But, of course, no one dares attempt such a thing as to correct an imperial boor.

There are, in particular, several almost pathetic appeals from Vienna,—old Emperor Francis Joseph cannot bear to sit in the same room with William and tries his utmost to avoid meeting him. When they do meet, Francis Joseph remains standing,—for hours if he must, to compel his guest, or host, to do likewise.

"I would rather endure any amount of fatigue than see that man pound his bones all the time," said Francis Joseph to the Princess Liechtenstein not long ago.

A further reason why William likes Americans: In their presence he may indulge his passion for boasting, since everything he exhibits to their gaze, "from a new fangled bath to a diadem," will evoke grateful "Ahs" and "Oh! how charming" from the

possessors of riches compared with which the imperial patrimony looks small indeed.

William's fondness for American women might be ungallantly explained by comparing their undoubted charms to the negative ones of the Fatherland's *Fraus*, but there are more potent reasons.

In 1903, when Crown Prince Wilhelm had just entered upon his twenty-first year, it was noted with alarm that the young man showed no inclination whatever for women's society.

At an age when a Hohenzollern is in duty bound to think of founding a family young William behaved strangely like the late lamented Alexander of Servia before the Maschin taught him the gentle art popularized by a daughter of France who became an Abbess, but would hate to be a mother.

The Eulenburg scandal was but gossip then, though court and brothel, public bath and race track reeked with its putrescent abominations. There had been no attempt to hunt down the Unspeakables, nevertheless it was hinted that the perverse character of the Crown Prince's tutor, Count William Hohenau, might be responsible.

Whether true or false I do not profess to know, certain it is that young Wilhelm's haughty contempt for girls, royal and otherwise, gave palpitations to many a proud mamma, while causing ditto fathers to smile their long, watery "I told you so."

As the husband is usually the last to see the horns a clever wife plants on his brow, so William *père* was behind the rest in noticing William *fils'* sexual indifference, or peculiarities. But, when at last he did take notice, the palace could scarcely hold him.

"What! he, who jumped from the saddle onto the nuptial couch after a Sheridan ride (see page 213, vol. 1), the father of a milksop without manly desires, prowess and endurance?"

"Madam," he roared, addressing the startled *Kaiserin*, "tell the Crown Prince what kind of husband I am, that I never, never disappointed you, nor any other woman for that matter."

"Willy, how can you be so indelicate?" faltered Dona.

"Indelicate?" cried the Kaiser, "dainty scruples when the interest of the Monarchy are at stake! Did the King of Hungary consider such when he commanded Johanna of Naples to consummate her marriage with his son Andreas instantly before his very eyes and those of the court? And when Frederick the Great ordered the Queen of Poland to be lifted bodily from the state papers she thought safe only under her royal posterior—though the Majesty pleaded absence of petticoats and unmentionables—was that an act of fastidiousness or of policy?"

"I repeat: Indelicate or not, your son must be taught to be a father and husband, and, if you refuse to act, Dona, I am sure the Poppe will undertake the job with pleasure."

And William bounced out of the room, convinced that he would have his own way, as usual.

An hour later the King of Würtemberg arrived and William's failings were temporarily forgotten in the paltry routine of official ceremonies: State reception, ditto visits, ditto dinner and, horror of horrors, the inevitable gala performance at the royal play house.

\* \* \* \* \*

"*Haussez les mains*," cried the Emperor in the evening, when he saw his guest and Rosa Poppe in the wings during an *entre-act* of the tiresome tragedy played in his honor,—"*Haussez les mains*, I say."

His Suabian Majesty is a modest man. He reddened and replied evasively: "I am no Victor Emmanuel, referring, of course, to *Re galantuomo*, the grandfather of the present incumbent of Italy's throne.

"Granted," laughed William, "I know you to be a Joseph of the first water, but I also know my little girl. How long have I known you, Rosa?"

The actress bowed low and replied in tones of entreaty: "I must beg leave from Your Majesty and His Majesty of Wurttemberg to withdraw. The part I am playing to-night does not admit of frivolities. No, I must go,—to remain would unfit me for the rest of the performance."

*Notabene*, Hebbel's Judith was on the boards, *Fräulein* Poppe essaying the title role. Judith and *haussez les mains*, heaven storming German idealism and bawdy house pleasantries! Only a "Prussian swine could think of such a combination," said the disgusted Wurttemberger afterward.

Meanwhile, the Kaiser had taken hold of Rosa's plump arm, caressing the pink and white flesh, yet holding it as in a vise.

"I won't let you go until you answer my question: How long have you had the honor of my intimate acquaintance?" There was a sinister emphasis on the qualifying word.

"If Your Majesty insists," faltered the actress, "more than six years."

"And did 'Papa' ever disappoint 'Baby'?" continued the Kaiser.

Rosa looked appealingly at the Wurttemberg Majesty, hoping that he might come to her rescue. But, William of Stuttgart was not fool enough to spoil his powerful namesake's fun. It might cost him, or his people, dear in the negotiations then under way.

"Come," insisted the Kaiser, "in all these six years did 'Papa' ever disappoint 'Baby'?"

"Never,—but now Your Majesty must allow me to go." And Poppe tore herself loose and ran into her dressing room, bolting the door.

"Did you hear that, Billie?" cried the Kaiser exultingly. "Never missed coming up to the lady's expectations in six years, and, *sub rosa*, the Poppe has a ravenous appetite. This in addition to my home duties—seven boys (the Kaiser always refers to his daughter as a boy.) Confess that the House of Suabia is not in it with the Hohenzollerns."

The King of Wurttemberg, who is childless and does not care to have the fact rubbed in, tried to pass the matter off, but William insisted on harping on the disagreeable subject during the rest of the evening, even before the Empress, when the pair returned to the Royal box.

Boasting of mistresses in his wife's presence is what the Kaiser calls testifying to his complete independence of domestic fetters.

Rosa Poppe happens to be his only flame at the Royal play house and Auguste Victoria is condemned to see him bow familiarly to her whenever the actress appears on the stage. If he had seven or a dozen mistresses on the theater's pay-roll, he would use the



dozen, or more, to proclaim his libertinage every time they came before the footlights, whether his wife be there or not. As to *haussez les mains*, the coarse witticism is a standing joke with the Kaiser and no green boy boasting of his first conquest could be more indiscreet than the Majesty of Germany at the age of fifty.

As all royal visitors to Berlin must submit to the inevitable gala performance of some tiresome play William considers divine, so none are spared the information that His Majesty occasionally spends an afternoon in Rosa's *boudoir*. There is no lack of details, either. The Kaiser likes to describe his "girl's" charms minutely; no single good point is omitted.

Once he pictured Rosa's ponderous buttocks to his mother-in-law in order to tease the old girl.

"So she is putting on flesh, is she?" cried the late Duchess. "None of your doings, though, I reckon, for she told me you never gave her a copper."

"Well, she has her salary, which I increase at regular intervals," answered the Kaiser with a frown, and changed the subject.

A royal mistress deriving no other benefits than the wages for her services on the stage is certainly a novelty. As to the increased pay granted her, I understand it barely covers the cost of the perfumes and delicacies His Majesty expects to find at *Fräulein Poppe's*. There must be baths of cologne or champagne; Poppe is supposed to keep the finest brands of cigars and cigarettes, liqueurs galore and books which the moral Majesty durst not have in his own house, yet Rosa stoutly maintains that her imperial

lover even refuses to leave a little *backsheesh* for expenses on the mantlepiece when he departs.

The actress is corroborated by a courtier who often attends His Majesty on his expeditions into the alcove. "He is as mean as Philip of Coburg, with whom Paris demi-mondaines refuse to sit at table, since he never offers even a bottle of wine by way of recompense," says this authority.

The remark recalls a story told at her former husband's expense by Princess Louise.

"On one of his frequent trips to Paris, Philip tried to escape from a gay flat without loosening his purse strings," says the Royal Highness, "and when the girl remonstrated, 'My dear,' he cried, 'you ought to consider yourself well paid by the distinction the presence of a Royal Prince conferred upon your establishment.'"

"'Distinction, indeed,' replied Celeste, 'I couldn't borrow five francs on it.'"

"But, I say it's worth a thousand francs, at the very least," insisted Philip, edging toward the door.

"'I will take you by your word,—by halves,' said the girl. 'Lest you pay me five hundred francs cash, I will place under my name at the door the title "*Titille de S. A. le Prince Philip de Coburg*.'"

"I shall have it torn down by the police," cried the Prince.

"'And I shall have it replaced day by day, and besides, send out ten thousand visiting cards with the announcement.'"

"The Prince paid the five hundred francs."



## CHAPTER XXI.

The morning after disgracing Rosa Poppe before King William, the Kaiser was in the saddle at an early hour. Even before his bath he had called up "Phili" Eulenburg, appointing a *rendezvous* near Castle Bellevue in the *Thiergarten*. The friends met half way.

"Heard of the Barrisons lately?" William fairly shouted the question, as "Phili," with a graceful courtesy parried his mount.

"Not since one of them killed poor Alfred. After crowning their career of wickedness in right royal style, they vanished, temporarily, at least."

The Ambassador referred to the son and heir of the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg, *ci devant* of Edinburgh, who perished miserably at the age of twenty-five, wrecked by debaucheries of which his adventures with the Barrisons formed a single, but fateful link.

The Barrisons — let us see — there were five of them, I believe, seemingly all of the same age — first saw the light in Copenhagen. Their notion of stagecraft and life they imbibed on New York's Great White Way, highroad to vice. Paris treated them on an equal footing with her own Cléo de Mèrodes and Liane de Pugeys before these ladies became grandmothers, and Berlin fell on their white necks, because their wardrobe was at Strassburg when they made their *début* at the Kaiser's capital.

For a moment it looked as if the Barrisons were destined to be the original *femmes nues* of the modern stage, but Lona, the eldest, who had been *Unter den Linden* before, knew her Berliners too well to give them more than a finger.

Each of the sisters carried in her handbag several pairs of fillibeg-dreadnaughts of the finest *batiste*, beautifully furbelowed and lace-trimmed, flower bedizened, tucked fore and aft and slashed and appliquéd and what not, yet so flimsy, withal, one might pull the things through a child's bracelet without touching the gold.

There were diaphanous corsets and covers to match, — latest Paris design.

Lona went to the nearest haberdashery and bought two hundred yards of narrow ribbons, half pink, half baby blue,— sixty feet of each per head of the sisters.

They set the town wild with their ounce of gauze and tulle and lace and the half pound of ribbons, by their young flesh tints and the studied carelessness of non-concealment they affected. Next morning all the court marshals of all the Highnesses in Berlin sent word to Lona, Sophie, Olga, Gertrude and Ethel that their "sublime master would be pleased to offer the sisters an engagement at the palace," etc., etc.

Be sure, young Alfred of Saxe was the first to put in his bid.

Alas! this offer of riches for favors proved his death warrant. English, Russian, French, Slav, and German women he had loved with impunity; these tiny American will-o'-wisps — all quivering flesh and devilishness — proved his undoing. The Barrisons were finally banished from Berlin because Lona, on

one special occasion, changed her costume for Alfred's, donning the latter's, *i. e.*, the imperial army uniform.

If she had only taken away her own toggery, all might have been well, but Alfred kept it, for a consideration, and, henceforth, he was "the Barrison" for the Eulenburgs, Hohenaus, Lynars and the rest of the Unspeakables, some of whom have since been disgraced. He died in a straitjacket, poor, wild boy.

\* \* \* \* \*

To return to William and Eulenburg cantering along the parkways, one impatient because his *maitre de plaisir* had been unsuccessful for once to render the wished-for account, the other cudgeling his brain for ways and means to please the august personage at his side.

As to the Barrisons — unless swallowed by the earth — the diplomatic service would hunt them up and, this failing, the police would. But it would take time, and William, as very evident from his manner, was not in the temper to brook delay.

"May I venture to ask my imperial friend —"

"Oh, I don't want the baggage myself," interrupted the Kaiser brusquely, "I inquired for *Monsieur, mon fils*. Devil take the Crown Prince, he is of an age when he needs an American girl worse than his mamma."

A shadow passed over Eulenburg's face. He bit his lip and pulled nervously on the reins. But a moment later he was all smiles again.

"His Imperial Highness!" he cried; "charmed if I dared hope to be of the slightest service to the excellent young man. Indeed," he added with his accustomed exaggeration, "I would fain be his Dubois, if Your Majesty commands."

"Prove it by arranging a trial marriage for him, one big with results." William laughed at the double *entendre*.

"Phili" joined in as a matter of course, then grew serious.

"Results?" he repeated, "not for the Barrisons, may it please Your Majesty. I know someone better, a quiet little girl, likewise of the blood republican —"

"Her name — who is she?" In his eagerness the Kaiser drove his horse hard against Eulenburg's side, squeezing the Count's right leg.

"Phili" raised himself in the stirrups, bent over the imperial master and whispered.

The Kaiser repeated the name, rolling it over his tongue.

"By George," he cried, "'Phili,' Dubois' mantle has indeed descended upon thy fair shoulders, to adopt your own phraseology. Hang me, if you don't deserve to be a cardinal."<sup>1</sup>

He wheeled around abruptly, turning his charger's head Berlin-ward.

"Quick," he cried, "if we hurry a bit we will catch Huelsen at breakfast. I shall explain, and he shall

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<sup>1</sup> Dubois, a simple *abbé*, was originally tutor to Duke Philip of Orleans, Regent of France during the minority of Louis XV. He earned his pupil's gratitude by acting as purveyor to the young Duke's vices, and this abominable trade he continued when the Duke married and, subsequently, became ruler of France. It would be foolish to deny that Dubois was a man of great mental powers, an adroit politician and a successful prime minister. By pandering to the vices of the great, both men and women, he achieved the highest distinction within the gift of the Church of Rome; he became an Archbishop and still later Cardinal. At the time of his death his titles included that of Duke of Cambray and Prince of the Holy Roman Empire.

procure you a *tête-à-tête* with the Miss this afternoon. You will attend to the rest, but no rash promises, if you please. A life contract at my opera if necessary; yes, and I will throw in the title of Royal Chamber Singer if she insists, but no money consideration beyond expenses — liberal expenses," he added in rather dubious style.

\* \* \* \* \*

The ignoble bargain, conceived in licentiousness and executed with true regal brutality, was struck within twenty-four hours after William and Eulenburg rode through Brandenburg gate. *Le droit de seigneur* may be dead with respect to peasant girls (except in the Philippines, where it still flourishes under the precious friars); in the case of prima donnas and actresses it is as much alive now as in the days when Philip d'Orleans was Regent of France, Grand Turk at the Paris Opera seraglio and foster father of the Mississippi bubble.

Here was an American virgin in the flower of her youth, struggling to obtain a foothold in the most difficult of professions.

"Make her embrace the oldest," commanded the Majesty, turned procurer. It was done as promptly as if he had said: "Fetch me another cup of tea."

In due time the Crown Prince's friends congratulated him on his "conquest," while the patrons of the Royal Opera House saw less and less of the popular alto.

"The little matter of being a month or so *enceinte* is no excuse for persistently shirking her duties," protested the Intendant.

"In Miss ——'s case, close both eyes," replied



William; "the Crown Prince and his American girl promised themselves a perfect brat, even if each hair on his head has to be made separately."

Well, William junior's baby proved a lusty youngster and his father a true Hohenzollern.

If the child had been a girl, doubt as to the Crown Prince's prowess might have lingered with royal mammas, but a boy, a knight of the trousers!

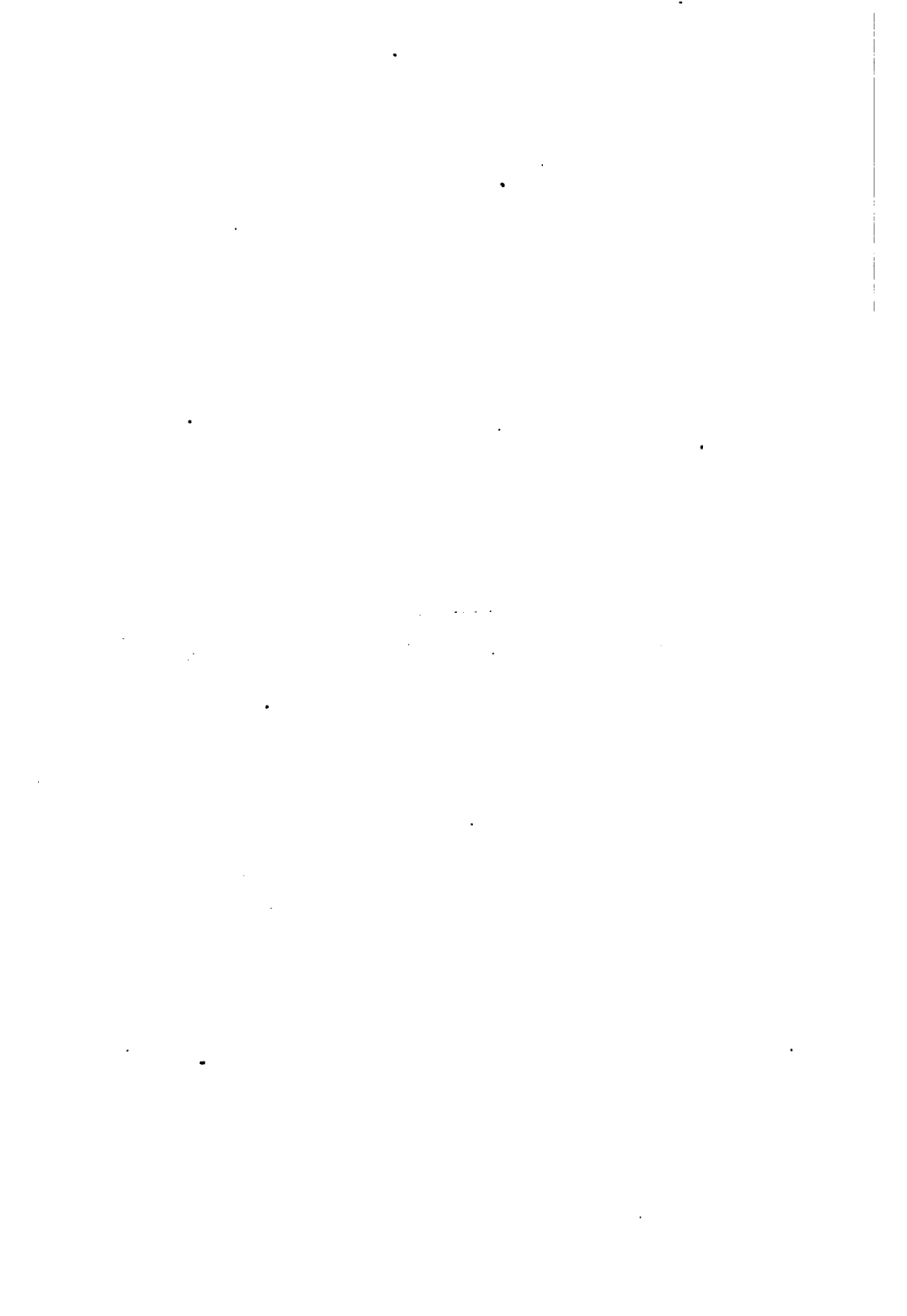
How strangely like the Chinese is the average German woman! Seeing the world through her husband's spectacles (kindly furnished by the authorities), she frowns on newly borns unpossessed of the quality of becoming cannon fodder at some future time.

If William junior's "trial kid" (as they called it at Court) had been a *Dirn*, instead of a *Bub*, the Fatherland's women would have esteemed the heir to the throne only half a man, like the pigtailed slit-eye whose attempts at male procreation miscarry. But, having out-Schencked Doctor Schenck, poor false alarm, the young father was heralded a hero everywhere. And the mother?

Pshaw, she was "only an opera singer, anyhow," and the Royal Intendant had orders to take care of her in most "magnificent style."

What this "magnificence" amounted to may be gathered from the experiences of another prima donna who worked *pour le roi de Prusse*.

In the winter of 1901, Signora Camilla Lundi, the famous Italian song bird, gave several successful concerts in the Berlin Philharmonic—she was one of the few concert singers drawing real money in the German capital and the papers praised her extravagantly.



**LONA BARRISON**

**Photogravure—From an original photo taken in Berlin**



PO. 1981  
ANNUAL

One evening, during an intermission, Baron von dem Knesebeck, Imperial Chamberlain, sent in his card. He told the Italian lady how "graciously pleased" His Majesty was by her success and that the Kaiser was anxious to hear her.

"We have a little *soirée* at the palace to-night," he said, "and both their Majesties would be glad to have you come to the *Schloss* after your performance here, for half an hour or so."

The signora, after the manner of prima donnas, pleaded exhaustion, nervousness, etc. She was "exceedingly sorry to disappoint Their Majesties," etc., etc.

"Disappoint the Kaiser!" cried the Chamberlain, "that is impossible. His Majesty made up his mind to hear you to-night and you must come. I now have the honor to convey to you the imperial command to appear at the *Schloss* after the concert."

Knesebeck made the signora a stiff bow and withdrew with all the haughtiness a Prussian *Junker* is capable of assuming when acting on high authority.

Lundi consulted with some of her German friends, who advised her to make the best of it and go to the palace as bidden, which she did after hurrying the concert through and dismissing her audience without a single encore.

Outside, a royal carriage was waiting, and the singer was whirled to the *Schloss* at breakneck speed. Arrived there, she was hustled into the imperial presence as soon as she had taken off her wraps.

Then she had to sing and sing again, everything she knew; Their Majesties were seemingly insatiable. Lundi did her best. Any woman in her position would.

But the perpetual grind to which the imperial hosts condemned her vocal cords put her powers of endurance to a severe test. Besides, she had not eaten a morsel for ten hours, since she makes it a rule to take her principal meal at the conclusion of the evening's concert.

Well, the Kaiser and *Kaiserin* "graciously commanded" encores and new pieces until long after midnight, when, with a frosty handshake and some commonplaces, they withdrew. Only then a lackey brought the singer a cup of lukewarm tea and a few dry crackers. Lundi swallowed the imperial repast and went home hungry and tortured by a headache.

"Never mind," she thought, "I need the money." By the way, the prima donna had just come from Vienna, where she had been likewise "commanded" by royalty, receiving a thousand crowns and a diamond breastpin as a reward.

But, two days passed and nothing was heard from the Imperial Court. Lundi got anxious. Duty called her to Paris, but she did not feel like abandoning the money earned.

So, on the third day after her appearance at Court, she addressed a polite letter to the Kaiser's Court Marshal, intimating that recompensation for her services had seemingly been overlooked. She added that her fee for singing in private was a thousand francs.

Thereupon arrived, after thrice twenty-four hours, a ponderous letter with the imprint of the Court Marshal's office, inclosing a check for 500 marks and the following information:

"The Royal Court Marshal-in-Chief has the honor

of acquainting Signora Lundi with the fact that it is not customary to pay artists whom the all-highest Lord and Lady deign to invite to one of their *soirées*. However, as madame insists, an extraordinary gratuity of 500 marks is hereby granted.

"My sublime Master, the King of Prussia, commands me, at the same time, to say that Signora Lundi's presence in His Majesty's states is not desired."

If Lundi had been looking for advertisement, she would have published this caddish letter broadcast, thus adding to the amusement of the nations. But, sober judgment prevailed. The Italian pocketed the 500 marks and the insult and decided to take no notice of the awful decree of banishment.

Since then she has time and again filled engagements in Prussia, the Kaiser not daring to interfere with her presence "in his states." Probably he is afraid, fearing the ridicule that would be heaped upon him.

To return to the Crown Prince's American girl-mistress: Her *accoucheur's* fee was paid three months after the "happy event;" the royal apothecary sent a receipted bill "with his compliments;" the Court Marshal and the Intendant of the opera each made out crest and seal-laden papers appointing Miss — this and that; her baby's picture was taken "by all-highest command" (cost to Miss — not a single *pfennig*); the baby died ("so good of the little thing," said both William senior and junior, and footed the undertaker's bill like laughing heirs) and —

*La comedia e finita*, as far as Miss — is con-



cerned. Like Rosa Poppe, "she has her salary," her title and the proud consciousness that a Hohenzollern once sat enthroned on the altar of her youthful affections like a monkey on a war elephant. For the rest—she served the King of Prussia and was paid in old Fritz's coin, as the Saxon's say, remembering their country's occupation by Frederick the Great.

This phrase is not so well known as its French equivalent, *pour le Roi de Prusse*. Strange, American society women do not seem to know either, for the score of them, who, in late years, worshipped at William's feet—Katherine Clemmons Gould (oh, the humor of it!) was the first, I believe, to break into the exclusive court-set—the Kaiser esteems no better than his son's "most obedient mare," the aforesaid Miss —.

Not that he ever conspired against the impregnable virtue of his American women acquaintances—the Eulenburg-Hohenau-Lynar-Buelows may have helped to keep him in the straight path—and, as long as he has bosoms and petticoats to look at, William is, as a rule, quite content. The insult is in the light in which he "sizes them up."

To use his own language:

"These 'Yankee' dames are so different from our native brand, blush at nothing, drink and curse like troopers, and the stories they know! Oh! such stories! Kidderlen never produced better ones."

Idle boast or deliberate calumny—which? And the imperial order to Prince Henry when the latter visited New York: "Above all, as my proxy, make love to —" (naming an estimable young matron of one of the leading families). Actions of this kind can only be

explained by the truism that heredity breeds kings sometimes, gentlemen — never.

Like most of us, William heard some silly rumors about the lady — before-marriage scandals, bastards of jealousy, envy and mendacity — and glibly decided to use them as a club. His brother was to pave the way to a possible flirtation with Mrs. X. Y. "next summer" and, of course, the preliminaries were to be attended with as much *éclat* as possible.

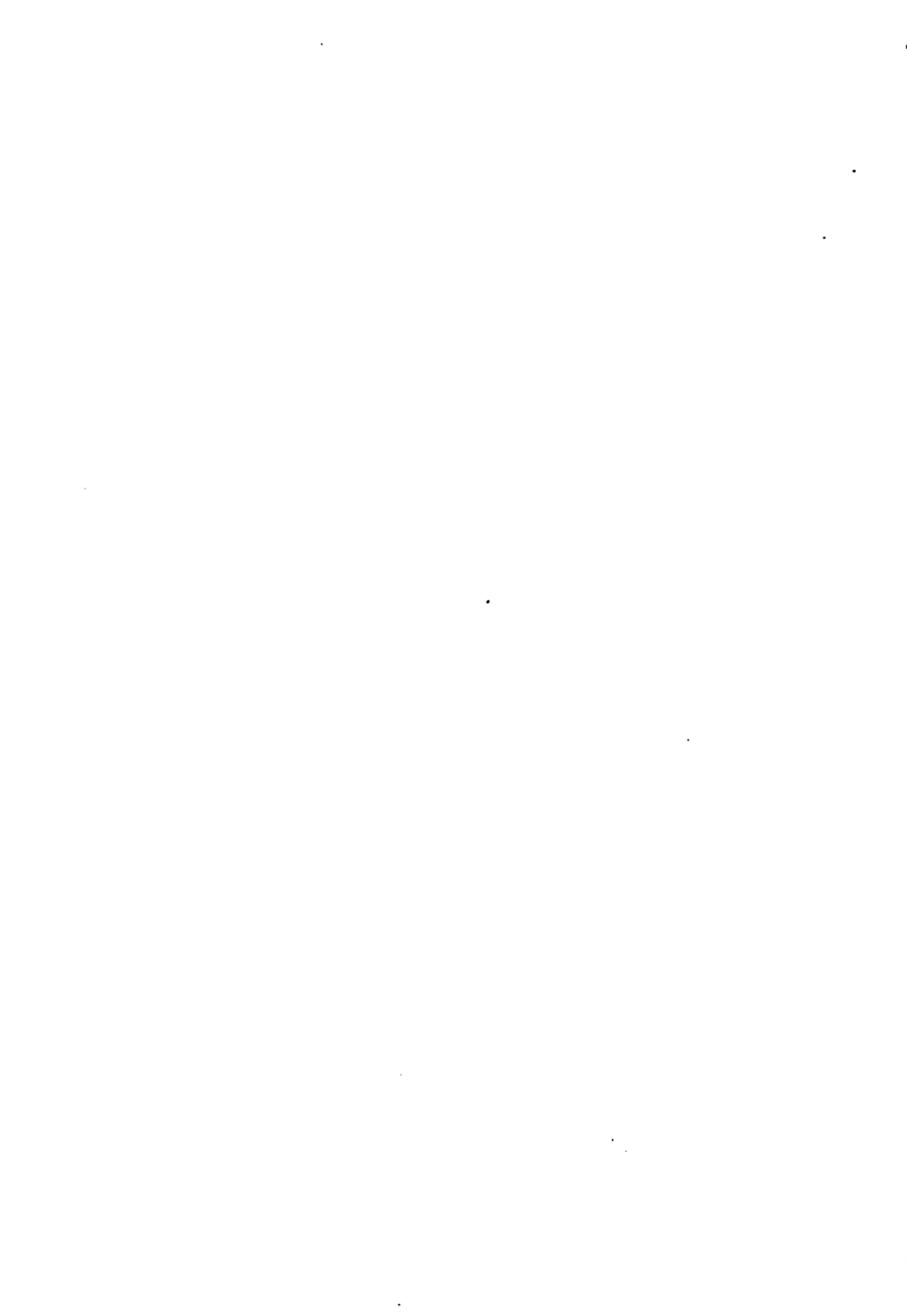
It's a habit with kings and lackeys to compromise the women they covet.

The only one who escaped the curse, though William was actually enamored of her, is Countess Morosini, "*la bella di Venetia*," who so frequently figured in the reports of the Kaiser's repeated journeys to Italy.

Owing to increasing matureness, Countess Annina retired as a "*bella*" some months ago, the mantle of her beauty descending upon the fair shoulders of her daughter, who just entered society.

This young girl is known in Venice as "Countessina." She is a blonde with bewitching dark eyes and the fairest complexion in the world.

Traveling Americans like the beautiful old palace on St. Markus Place, where the Morosinis dwell, and which is so crowded with art treasures that J. Pierpont Morgan spends many hours there every time he visits the Queen of the Adriatic.



## CHAPTER XXII.

While, apparently at least, American Society does not dispute the right of a king to offer insult to those with whom he associates on a footing of semi-equality, the Kaiser received two powerful lessons in politeness of late, one by a doughty Bavarian artist, the other by one of his own subjects. The latter, unfortunately, had to pay with his life for the privilege of asserting his manhood.

George Sand tells some curious stories of the treatment art and artists suffered at the hands of a Prussian king in the eighteenth century. William, as before stated, continues his ancestor's methods.

It was one of those bright, outspoken Munich "artist-fellows" who refused to be dictated to by the imperial patron of everything "sordid, stiff and ungraceful in the line of sculptury and painting."

Scene: A well-known "*Salon*," *Unter den Linden*.

The Kaiser came to view the exhibition of Beyerlein sculpturies and went through the formality with his usual patronizing air. Then he sent for the artist.

"I am not displeased with your work," he said to the Bavarian, who, having observed the Kaiser's disdainful mien, was fairly boiling with rage; "indeed, I am rather pleased with one or two things you have done, but there are various mistakes of artistic judgment that you ought to repair before aspiring to my

patronage. I advise you to go to Begas. His works fairly express my artistic taste in the line of sculpture. Begas will make a really successful artist out of you."

By this time the fat South-German was almost bursting.

"Majesty," he roared in the abrupt Berlin manner, "Majesty, I would never dare offer you advice in matters of government, hence, I decline positively to accept any attempt at instruction, or correction, from you in my line. I know full well what I want to do and what I do not want to do in art."

Saying this, Beyerlein turned on his heel and marched out of the *salon*, leaving the Kaiser speechless and his entourage petrified with terror. After an awkward pause the Kaiser found his tongue and used it to give expression to language that would not look well in print. As he entered his carriage he was heard to say to his adjutant: "Make a note of it, Moltke, all state institutions are to be warned against buying from this impudent Munich mismatch, and no official paper shall ever mention his name. And, by the way, don't forget to remind me to write to the Regent (of Bavaria) telling him of this fellow's effrontery. He must be boycotted, boycotted and starved!"

I would like to have seen the Regent's face when he received William's letter. How he must have grunted with satisfaction.

The affair with Lieutenant von Hahncke, son of the former chief of the Kaiser's military household, was far more serious.

It happened in the spring of 1900, when the Kaiser was sorely troubled with his left ear and his phy-

sicians, desiring a little rest for themselves, advised a sea voyage.

The small cruiser *Illis* was chosen and the trip dubbed a manœuvre, so that the public treasury might be mulcted for the cost. William, as we know, is always hard up and embraces every opportunity for shifting expenses on his subjects' shoulders.

Hahncke, one of the *Illis*' officers, was an ambitious young fellow, well liked on board, but somewhat lacking in diplomacy.

When, on the first day out, His Majesty greeted him with a patronizing air, saying to Prince Eulenburg that he meant to be particularly gracious "to the old man's cub, even if he did not have the making of an admiral in him," the lieutenant made some show of resentment and withdrew from the Royal presence at the first possible moment.

That notwithstanding he received a "command" to attend the after supper drinking bout billed for the evening's entertainment.

There, surrounded by fawning sycophants, the Kaiser loaded Hahncke with mock favors, ordering him to drink more than was good for him. Later, himself drunk with wine and arrogance, the Kaiser abused the lieutenant as a "sot" who ought to be reported to his captain for misbehavior.

Again Hahncke refused to accept the Kaiser's insults, like a true courtier, *i. e.*, as the essence of refined humor, but at the time trouble was avoided, the captain ordering all junior officers to retire.

The morning after, William awoke with the proverbial "big head" and before breakfast sauntered out of his cabin to look for victims on which to wreak his displeasure.

He found Hahncke engaged in drilling a company of sailors and started in at once finding fault.

"Couldn't he see that this man hadn't washed his neck," or that "another held his sword awkwardly?" Hahncke's company was the "dirtiest gang of boobies that ever passed review before his imperial eye" and he would make an "example of them and their neglectful officer."

At this von Hahnke stepped forward briskly, taking a firmer grip on his sword.

"I beg Your Majesty to step into the cabin—I have something to communicate to Your Majesty," he said, with white lips, adding under his breath: "For discipline's sake, I must see Your Majesty alone."

The Kaiser gave the company of sailors a furtive glance and said: "The lieutenant will report your punishment in a few minutes. Meanwhile, stand at attention."

William then went ahead into the main cabin, which, for the time being, was deserted, and addressed von Hahncke sarcastically: "And what may your lieutenantship have to say to me? Be quick. If there is any excuse for the *Schweinerei* (piggishness) in your company, out with it!"

"I am not here to make excuses," replied Hahncke, looking the Kaiser squarely in the eye. "I asked you to step into the cabin to settle a point of honor. You have insulted me before my comrades and before my men without reason or warrant; you have trampled on my military honor and on my manhood and I want Your Majesty to give me the satisfaction to which I am entitled at your hands as a Prussian officer."

The Kaiser moved uneasily. "Lieutenant von

Hahncke," he said, assuming his most imperious air, "you will retire to your cabin and await my pleasure. Give up your sword. You are a prisoner."

"Not until you have given me satisfaction," cried Hahncke, advancing menacingly.

By this time the Kaiser had edged to the door of the cabin and, as he was about to step out, he said, with all the brutal disdain he is capable of: "Shut your snout" (*Maul*).<sup>1</sup>

Before William could make another move, Hahncke's tall figure was bending over him: "Did you speak officially, or shall I regard your insults as the outbursts of a drunken and disorderly mind?" he hissed into the Emperor's ear, totally neglectful of giving William his accustomed title of Majesty.

"How dare you, *canaille*?" demanded the Emperor, with blanched face and gnashing his teeth.

But he had not quite finished the damning word, when von Hahncke's good right hand, dropping the sword, shot out and landed squarely on the Emperor's jaw, felling him to the ground. As he lay there, blood gushing from his mouth, the young officer realized what he had done and rang the bell.

"His Majesty is not well," he said to the orderly. "Send for His Majesty's valet and dispatch a man to the commandant, informing him that I have a report to make."

Pandemonium reigned on the *Ilitis* for the next fifteen minutes, as one may imagine. All sorts of conflicting reports were whispered on deck, in mess-room,

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<sup>1</sup> *Maul*, indicating mouth, is synonymous with the term "*Mund*," but is used only with reference to persons of low extraction and animals.



below, everywhere, but the most audacious only dared hint that His Majesty might have been overcome by another epileptic fit.

While the Kaiser's prostrate form was carried to the chart-room, his own cabin being in disorder, the white-faced Hahncke told his story to the horrified commander. When he had finished, his superior officer merely said: "Your sword, sir, you are my prisoner—go to your room until further notice." And under his breath he added: "As a Prussian officer and descendant of a long line of soldiers, you know, of course, what is expected of you."

Poor Hahncke *did* know. As soon as he got hold of his revolver he pressed the muzzle against his temple, at the same time jumping off deck. His body was never recovered.

The Kaiser was quickly brought to by his physicians, who, having instructions from the commandant, expressed satisfaction to him that the "accident" had passed off without leaving considerable disfiguring marks.

"The beam that struck Your Majesty as the ship gave that sudden lurch might have broken Your Majesty's chin or cheek bone. Your Majesty's subjects ought to thank God on their bended knees for the good luck that attended Your Majesty amid ill-fortune."

I don't blame the Kaiser for accepting the story and causing it to be telegraphed all over the world.

As to poor Hahncke, quite an elaborate yarn was concocted to explain his death.

He had been in love with a young woman "beneath his rank," and had asked the Emperor for permission

to marry her, but, of course, His Majesty had sternly refused.

"From that moment on," said the official papers, "young Hahncke became melancholy and his suicide was the result of much brooding over his hopeless love affair."

There were other versions, too, but none came anywhere near the truth. Nor was it explained why the *Illis* remained in commission three weeks longer than originally intended.

The real reason was: His Majesty did not dare go ashore until the last traces of the punishment he received had disappeared.

So much for the physical stigmata. As to the moral, William tried to forget them in drink. He probably drank more champagne during these three weeks than during any like period of his life.

A famous Berlin physician, who knows the Emperor's ailments, has since pointed out to me that there was more truth than fancy in the remarks of the *Illis*' doctors.

"If Hahncke had aimed three inches higher, his blow might have burst the poison reservoir in the left side of His Majesty's head," said the professor. "And, reflect! The release of the poison would render the Emperor a raving maniac."

"Has he ever talked to you about the accident on the *Illis*?" I asked.

"Frequently," replied the medical man. "He speaks of the beam as familiarly as if he had slept with it all his life. I really think he believes in it himself. While there is no doubt that he saw

Hahncke strike him, he eagerly adopted the more convenient version of an accident, invented by his servants, and, being a man of unbounded imagination, probably thinks it true himself by this time.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Courtiers are to-day more satisfied than ever, that if the Kaiser ever loses his reason — “the disease of the ear mounting to the brain,” as the doctors put it — *lèse Majesté* will probably be at the bottom of the trouble.

Not that I anticipate that the von Hahncke incident will ever be repeated now that William is a gray-haired old man,—it is quite possible though that the poison bag lodged in William’s left ear may be emptied into the brain by other than fistic methods.

Young Hahncke did away with himself because he actually thought that by hitting the Emperor on the jaw he had inflicted another madman in the guise of a ruler upon the German people — they already have more than enough: A king (Bavaria), a grand duke (Oldenburg), and three or four princes, two Reusses and some Lippes.

But, as the late Professor Virchow pointed out: “The rush of poisonous matter to the Kaiser’s brain cells, rendering them unfit to perform their functions, may be consequent upon other than physical violence, — a fall or similar accident. High state of excitement, wrath or other poisons may cause the catastrophe,” added the eminent alienist.

And nothing excites William quite as much as the thought that, of his 60,000,000 of Germans, one or an-

other may refuse to take him at the exaggerated valuation he puts on himself.

Listen to the following characteristic story told by General von Scholl, William's boon companion on his hunting trips.

"It happened in Rominton," says his Excellency, "and the chase had come off to His Majesty's entire satisfaction, which means everybody else's complete disappointment. That is to say: By the chief forester's trickery all the game was driven before the Emperor's gun, while the rest of us got nothing but a few miserable hares, or rabbits to massacre. Indeed, the Kaiser was so elated with his success as a pig sticker and deer butcher that he indulged in good-natured persiflage—a rare thing with him. Consequently all present had visions of plenty of champagne and imported cigars in the evening, for, as you know, when His Majesty has had a bad day's shooting, he goes to bed as soon as he comes home, condemning his friends and guests to a diet of Berlin beer and *stinkadores*, made of German cabbage leaves, the rankest in all Christendom.

"As we were walking toward the carriages, young Fuchs, the under-huntsman, came to me and whispered:

"'Does your Excellency advise me to ask His Majesty now?'

"'Go ahead, my boy,' I answered, 'if he doesn't grant it now he never will.' Fuchs referred to a boon he desired, namely, a pardon for his old uncle undergoing imprisonment for *lèse Majesté*.

"His case was one of the rankest that ever came to my notice. Fuchs' relative, it seems, is a well-to-do

Pommeranian farmer. During the last manoeuvres the King's horses trampled down the old man's corn. He sued the government and lost. When he threatened to appeal, the state's attorney tried to dissuade him, pointing out that he should feel honored rather, seeing that the Kaiser himself had commanded the troops that destroyed his crops.

"‘The Kaiser,’ said the old farmer savagely, ‘can kiss my ——,’ naming a portion of his anatomy that is never kissed nowadays, since the French Revolution got the act into disrepute. At that period thousands of noble lords and ladies were made to osculate — not the feet or hands of their former peasants, who in their subtle way took revenge for the insults heaped upon them by their erstwhile masters and mistresses.

"At any rate," continued the General, "old Fuchs simply used a figure of vulgar speech, as all of us are liable to do under provocation, but the public prosecutor hailed the incident as a means for bringing his ignoble carcass to ‘all-highest’ notice. Forthwith he clapped the farmer into jail and had him tried for *lèse Majesté*.

"‘Nine months,’ said the judge. "Insult to Majesty is a child that must be carried full time in the Fatherland," added the General grimly.

"Well, seeing that William was in such exceptionally good humor, the horizon ablaze with popping corks and fiddlesticks, as they say on the Rhine, the under-huntsman took heart and asked the Kaiser to pardon his old uncle.

"A gentleman of our party had his eye on William while Fuchs pleaded his case. He says the Emperor alternately turned red, white and green in the face.

The green prevailed when he made answer in these words:

“‘*Herr*, I am astonished beyond bounds at your audacity. You ask for a boon,—it’s yours! I hereby promise you that I will forget the act of reckless hardihood you have been guilty of. You shall not be punished for asking the liberation of a traitor. Do you know,’ he added, ‘what they did with fellows like you in olden times? They might deem themselves lucky if they were not disembowelled or broken on the wheel.’

“After that the Kaiser paused and beckoned for the rest of the company. When we were assembled around him, he continued: ‘Let me state here, once and for all, that under certain conditions I may feel inclined to pardon even a common murderer, but to my mind the man who insults a crowned head is ten times worse than a murderer. Pardon him I never will.

“‘As to Fuchs’s case, his relative is undergoing most inadequate punishment for the grossest of crimes, seeing that his vile tongue insulted God’s anointed, the head of the German nation. May he rot in prison. I will never say the word or raise a finger to give him back the liberty which he so grossly abused.

“‘Take notice of this, all of you, and no more talk, if you please, of pardoning traitors and the like.’”

Even humble petitioners for the correction of judicial errors, William regards as akin to revolutionists, arguing thus:

“The administration of my Empire is so perfect, that no one has cause for complaint.

“To attempt to bring matters of State, or personal

moment, to my notice involves the imputation that something is wrong, that one of my officials does not perform his duty as he should under my guidance. This I cannot tolerate, as it conveys the impression that I, myself, may be lacking in vigilance, or in the administration of justice."

Some little time ago, when the Kaiser was riding in state through the streets of Berlin to attend the unveiling of one of the lifesized puppets lining the Avenue of Victory and giving palpitations of disgust to every lover of art, a poor old lady dropped an envelope into the Royal carriage.

The Adjutant, sitting to William's left, picked up the missive and, with a respectful bow, held it out in his hand, not daring to presume whether the letter should be accepted or not.

The Kaiser grabbed the envelope with a scowl. Then, without reading even the address, flung it into the street and rubbed his gloved hand over his coat, as if anxious to remove a stain.

He cursed the old woman who had the "effrontery to assault him with her dirty letter" all the way down to the place of unveiling and, arrived there, summoned the Chief of Police.

"Fine order you keep," he roared at the official. "On the way here another hussy bombarded me with her filthy missives. Unfortunately, I kicked the rag out of the carriage, otherwise the old strumpet's name might have been ascertained for the prosecuting attorney."

I beg the reader's pardon for the language used, it's the "all-highest,"—somewhat modified.





## CHAPTER XXIV.

The events described in the last few chapters having happened after 1900, some, indeed, being of recent occurrence, it is evident that the Kaiser has learned nothing and forgotten less since these memoirs of his Court first enlightened the world as to his real character.

As his speech to the pardon-seeking forester shows, his ego-mania continues unchecked, and his contempt for the feelings of others is as outspoken to-day as when he drove his mother from her palace, his sister of Meiningen from her home, or allowed the Baroness von Kotze to grovel, her prayers unheard, at his feet.

When he turned his own Sir Pertinax Mac Syco-phanth in that supreme effort of smell-feast buncombe, the autobiography "William, Emperor Rex," written to discredit, if possible, these presents, better things were expected of the Kaiser.

Argued folks: What could be the object of representing one self an angel, hero and cardinal-virtues-monopolist, lest one be resolved to make a show, at least, of resembling the self-portrait, wretchedly drawn and superlatively overdrawn as it was.

But, as the eighteenth Louis said when the Bourbons returned to Paris: "Everything remained as before."

For explanation, turn your gaze upon prisoner No. 2213, engaged at basket-making in the Siegburg county jail, in Rhineland.

The man in dull, dirty gray, with head shorn and fresh sores on his long, aristocratic fingers, declining to become used to manual labor, regulations notwithstanding, is the "most illustrious" Count Johannes von Lynar, sometime Colonel of His Majesty's Horse Guards, brother-in-law of the Grand Duke of Hesse, husband of Princess Anne Elizabeth of Solms, Knight and Commander of many Royal decorations, and member of the Prussian House of Lords by hereditary right.

Small wonder, the former exquisite of the Imperial Court whose career of corruption was cut short by Harden, cried like a baby when ordered, upon his arrival at Siegburg, to shed his showy uniform, clanking sword and jewel-studded medals.

And it is not surprising at all that he was even more astonished when *Herr* von Lepelle, the goaler, coldly informed him that he would be treated like any other miscreant,—this after the noble prisoner had been allowed to resign from the army (by the Kaiser's grace) to escape being ingloriously kicked out.

Was "Jeanie," then, completely forgotten by his *quondam* bosom friend, the head of the German Empire?

Not entirely.

While the prison physician is of opinion that ordinary jail fare would prove injurious to the health of prisoner No. 2213, the said No. 2213 is permitted to order his food from a restaurant. But, of course, what passes for delicacies in a one-horse town of the provinces is very unlike the dainties William's boon companion of old enjoyed at the Imperial table or at his own luxurious palaces and country houses.

To crown his discomforts, prisoner No. 2213 is not permitted, under any circumstances, to partake of stimulants of any kind. Neither will he have the consolation of a pipe or cigar,—smoking is strictly prohibited in prison.

And, *notabene*, No. 2213 was for many years the Kaiser's adviser in matters of old vintages, champagnes, rare brandies and tobacco.

Another picture: After all that *Herr* Harden, editor of *Die Zukunft*, said and did and wrote about the members of the Round Table, he has on hand some sixty columns more of matter dealing with the Unspeakables. Proofs are deposited in London, and, if *Die Zukunft* should be seized after its editor is done away with as threatened, the war he has waged will continue, interference, official or other, notwithstanding.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Le règne des Mignons* in Prussia lies dormant then; that it is not as dead as the last Valois, who invented the pretty game of peopling the highest offices in the gift of the crown with harlots in breeches, is entirely due to William's initiative who, by his Chancellor, declared in the Reichstag that the Unspeakables' names were only temporarily dropped from the Court visiting list.

"As soon as the innocence of these gentlemen is established, they will be restored to the honors and privileges now held in abeyance," said Prince Buelow.

Meanwhile, two — Lynar and Eulenburg — suffered themselves to be compromised in such fashion that escape by official favoritism, or Imperial command,

was out of all question, but only Lynar was punished. An accommodating judge gave Eulenburg sick leave for an indefinite period, permitting him to retire to Liebenberg.

Count Lynar in his gray smock, cutting *Frankfurters* with a leaden spoon, affords a terrible lesson to favorites of Royalty that neglect to bolster and fortify their nest with written proofs of the master's connivance in the vices they practice, particularly when the incriminated action happens to be *le vice allemand*, which designation is the latest French pleasantry launched against the Court of Berlin.

The Counts Fritz and William von Hohenau, Prince "Phili" Eulenburg, General Count Kuno von Moltke and others took the precaution. Siegburg, therefore, has no terrors for them. With their correspondence safely vaulted in the Bank of England, they can afford to defy the Courts, the newspapers and public opinion.

As to the main culprit, chief of the Royal Prussian Court Black Leg Society, also known as Round Table and *Camarilla*—as to "Phili" Eulenburg, preceding chapters offer diverse side lights, but a few biographical notes, however incomplete, seem necessary to a thorough understanding of his character.

Here we have a chartered libertine whom the Kaiser raised from the position of an obscure Councillor of Legation to the greatest honors in the land, whom he enriched at the taxpayer's expense by various grants and, finally, made practical overseer of the whole German diplomatic corps.

William erected his own statue in Eulenburg's palace yard, conferred upon him the title of Prince and appointed him Member of the House of Lords and Privy Councillor.

A wing of Liebenberg Castle, communicating with "Phili's" apartments, was set aside for William's own Imperial use,—in short, he showered his male strumpet, up to the very day of the Harden publications, with every favor in his gift.

As stated, Eulenburg was Third Secretary of Legation in Munich when the Kaiser came to the throne. Soon afterward they met at Castle Schlobitten, the seat of Count, now Prince, Richard Dohna, an honest man, of fine moral sensibilities, who stigmatizes the part he unwittingly played by this chance introduction as "the crowning folly of his life, never to be sufficiently atoned for."

Less than a month after the meeting at Schlobitten, the unknown diplomat's appointment as Minister to Oldenburg was gazetted and two years later — Eulenburg having in the meantime attended the Kaiser on his Northland trip — we find him Ambassador at a Royal Court, Stuttgart.

Towards *fin-de-siècle* he held the more important post of Ambassador to Bavaria and, until 1902, acted as the Kaiser's representative in Vienna when he was not dancing attendance upon William in Berlin, at his hunting boxes or on his travels.

As repeatedly shown in the first part of these memoirs, Eulenburg had little besides his salary to bless himself with during these early years, for Liebenberg, bought with his wife's money, yielded no revenue to speak of.

In 1898, however, he inherited the domain of Hertefeld, in Rhineland, with an income of quite one hundred thousand marks per year (\$25,000). Thereupon, the Kaiser created him successively Baron of Hertefeld.

feld, Count von Sandels and Prince, with the appellation of Serene Highness.

And, after the late Baron Nathan Rothschild — all the Unspeakables called him "Nathie" — made the new "*Altesse*" heir to a couple of millions of francs — the wages of sin abominable — the Kaiser added the title of "Right Honorable Privy Councillor to the Prussian Crown" and sent "Phili" to the House of Lords as his special representative.

Besides the Prince, we met in previous chapters four other Eulenburgs fattened by Imperial favor, largely on "Phili's" account: Count Botho, ex-Minister of State, Count Augustus, the Imperial Court Marshal, Major, Count Frederick Botho, and the Commander of the Body *Uhlans*.

Prince "Phili" is the father of two unmarried daughters, Countesses Alexandrine and Victoria. His eldest son, Frederick, destined to inherit the Princely title, married a rich Viennese girl and has an only daughter, Countess Ingeborg. Two younger sons, Counts Siegwart and Charles, have not yet completed their studies.

Their sister Augusta ran away from home, some years ago, with her father's then secretary, Edmund Jaroljmek, a Pole.

After the first Harden trial, Countess Augusta congratulated the editor on his victory over her father, while Jaroljmek, probably to balance accounts, declared emphatically, that the rumors stamping him a victim of his father-in-law's libertinage had no foundation in fact, — which is uplifting, to say the least.

To finish the chapter about "Phili's" family: His daughter-in-law, Countess Frederick, *née* Marie Bar-

ness Mayr de Meinhof, refuses to ever set foot in Liebenberg again, in token of which resolution she abandoned the construction of the grand castle rising, half finished, in the shadow of the princely chateau.

\* \* \* \* \*

To establish, in cold type, the relationship between Kaiser Wilhelm and the person abandoned by his children, common decency forbids. That it continued for twenty years the *scandalum magnatum* of Europe's courts, despite the protests and anathemas of three Chancellors — Bismarck, Caprivi and Hohenlohe — suffices to characterize the friendship between the head of the German Empire and the seducer of sailor boys and recruits, who boasted that a "sweaty fisherman's blouse" smelled sweeter to him than the most dainty, perfumed petticoat.

Prince Bismarck used to say: "There have been some clever warriors among the Kinadists — Alcibiades, Cæsar, Peter the Great, and many Turkish Sultans, whose names I forgot — but never a diplomat of distinction."

And both Bismarck *père* and his son Herbert made it their business to tell the Emperor repeatedly that Eulenburg was unfit company for him, stating their reasons in the plainest language.

To cap the climax, the elder Bismarck added: "One glance of Eulenburg's lecherous eyes is enough to spoil the most elaborate luncheon for me."— Could *gourmet* express himself more emphatically?

But, the Kaiser took no notice and continued to wear the badge of "horrid effeminacy," to quote Pepys, the bracelet "sacred to friendship,"— but whether it



**THE KAISER EMBRACING AND KISSING A FRIEND**



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men must be sadly impaired, for Eulenburg's name appears on the police roll of dishonor, section "The Gentlemanly Perverse," as early as 1894.

Baron von Richthofen, one of the police presidents of Berlin, appointed by the Kaiser, put it there.

And the authorities of Oldenburg, Munich, Starnberg, Stuttgart and Vienna promptly followed suit. Wherever His Majesty's Councillor, Minister or Ambassador stopped for any length of time, in his official capacity, or otherwise, he was recognized as a moral leper and placed under police surveillance for the protection of minors.

That Baron Richthofen and his successors in the presidency of the Berlin police, who report daily to the Kaiser on criminal and personal affairs, made it a point not to annoy him with gossip reflecting on an intimate friend goes without saying, but that neither of these gentlemen was ever forced, by duty or circumstances, to allude to, or hint at, Eulenburg's Lupinar adventures is about as likely as that a camel jumps through the eye of a needle.

It is proved, on the other hand, that the highest police authority in Prussia, William's appointee, expressly forbade *Herren* von Treskow and Kopp, members of the Berlin detective force, to prosecute "Phili" Eulenburg along with the rest of the Kalokagathis.

This command was issued when Eulenburg had besotted himself with a number of Berlin "lowbrows" to the extent of taking their money—a male Theodora, only worse, for the Byzantine Empress, born and bred a courtesan, simply returned to her old trade, But, come to think of it, was harlotry a new one for "Phili"?

His Munich soldier-friends tell us that he "lent" them to his intimates, Count Johannes Lonyay, Count Lynar, Count Wedell, Baron von Wendelstadt and others. And there is no manner of doubt that he introduced to the Kaiser Sailor Trost, of the Hohenzollern, and Count Schack of Munich, in whose picture gallery (since willed to the Kaiser) *le vice allemand* wriggled its wildest.

Why?

Not for the same reason, let us hope, that prompted "Phili" to recommend Recruit Bollhardt to Captain of Horse, Count Lynar, and Riedel, of the Lancers, to Count "Tütü" Moltke, when the latter commanded the Magdeburg Cuirassiers.

Moltke, by the way, had the goodness to bring to His Majesty's notice another sailor of the Imperial yacht, Gustave Steinhauer, by name, and, like the rest of the *Mignons*, Gus enjoyed a meteoric career: Sailor, first mate, police sergeant, chief and guardian of the Imperial person whenever the Kaiser went to see his beloved "Phili."

"The rest of the *Mignons*," I said, allow me:—Court Councillor Kestler, at His Majesty's service. Rose from the ranks to gentlemanly estate and high honors. Makes as much noise as a Spanish procession mule, even when he only glides through a room,—the numerous Royal decorations on his devoted breast cause the silvery racket.

Kestler, by the way, had the misfortune to pink Prince Richard Dohna during the last hunt the gentlemen of the Round Table held at Liebenberg.

"Awfully sorry," of course,—ought to have killed him outright since Dohna was the only non-Kinadist

in the jolly house party, which included, besides "Tütü" Moltke. Lynar and the two Hohenaus, Raymond Lecomte, French *Chargé d'Affaires* in Berlin, Count Edgar Wedell and Gunther Count von der Schulenburg, of Castle Oest, Rhineland.

The latter is the genius who figured out that every tenth German aristocrat is an Unspeakable and that, for the reasons stated, the Fatherland's noblemen ought to unite in a club for mutual amusement and protection.— every tenth man of them.

I believe he cited St. Paul to justify the demand for this unholy union.

For Edgar Wedell, too, the hunt turned out badly.

Some time later His Majesty's Chamberlain was publicly accused — ere the Royal president of police could prevent it — but, of course, the Excellency was given a chance to join the Hohenaus on foreign shores.

The awful Prussian Nemesis was not wholly blind, though. Count Wedell's residence in the Berlin Princess's palace, adjoining the Crown Prince's, and connected with it by a stone arch, he "forever" forfeited.

Terrible punishment for the dastard who turned a Royal residence into a brothel! His Excellency's "tea parties," you must know, were invariably held in the palace, and Count Kuno von Moltke, guardian of the capital's morals and honor, was a regular attendant there.

As a great man is best known to his valet, so the wife of a person of the Moltke stripe is most capable of passing judgment on him.

Hear what *Frau* von Elbe, sometime Countess Kuno von Moltke, says of the Emperor's friend, "Tütü":



"Scarcely had we been married, that the Count turned upon me and bade me not touch him, nor come near him, denouncing marriage as the vilest institution and woman as unworthy of consideration by man.

"I returned from our wedding trip a mental wreck, a frightened, brow-beaten girl, afraid to look my mother in the eye, or to face my friends."

It is impossible, outside of a courtroom, to even hint at the language in which Count Moltke defended his theories regarding women and marriage. That he was sent into the world by Providence to inflict pain and to chastise her "vile sex," was one of his pet phrases.

*Frau* von Elbe continued: "While abusing me and insulting my womanhood, Count Moltke referred in words of disquieting sweetness to his male friends, particularly Eulenburg. I did not understand, thought he was joking, at first, but my eyes were soon to be opened.

"One day my husband came home very much elated.

"After dinner I happened to have business in his study, and there I found him standing before a mirror kissing a handkerchief. It struck me as comical and I laughed outright, whereupon he turned on me savagely and cried:

"Can you not see, goose, that I have the honor and the pleasure of holding in my hand a souvenir from Prince "Phili"? He gave it to me this forenoon, and I have been in a transport of happiness ever since."

"Next day Prince Eulenburg called and asked to see me in private. When we were alone, he fell upon

his knees and, raising his hands in supplication, begged me never to insist upon my conjugal rights, but to give him back the 'friend of his soul, his Tütü.'"

Amid such scenes of degradation *Frau* von Elbe spent eight long years, being reluctant to sue for divorce on religious grounds. When finally she decided on separation, she asked the Count: "What will His Majesty say to this?"

"Pshaw," replied the Commander of Berlin, "the Kaiser hears only as much of affairs as I want him to know,—no more."

Her marriage to von Moltke was *Frau* von Elbe's second venture, and fear for the purity of a little son she had by her first husband induced her as much as other considerations to seek divorce, despite religious scruples.

*Frau* von Elbe stated in the divorce court that the splendor of Count Moltke's military career had attracted her. "Career" and "splendor" must be taken with a grain of salt, of course. As a matter of fact, "Tütü" never rose above the level of a drawing-room soldier, and that he achieved exalted positions over the heads of officers of real worth was entirely due to the Kaiser's favor.

However, what military qualities Moltke lacks, he makes up for in sweet affection for the "all-highest master."

This fawning courtier and fastidious Martinet, who, as a benedict of three days' standing, told his bride that a married woman was no better than a ———, wrote of the Emperor in such terms of endearment as "love" and "sweetheart," saying that he longed to hold him "in his warm embrace," and directly ad-

dressed him at various times as "my soul," "my all," etc.

If the walls of the Bank of England had eyes we might know how the Emperor replied to these outbursts of unholy passion, for there, as stated, are deposited the letters he wrote to the Unspeakables more careful about their correspondence than Princess Anne-Elizabeth's husband.

Personally, he never hesitated, before the Round Table scandals became public property, to display his affection for the *Mignons*. If Count Lynar could obtain a respite of a day, only for each kiss William showered upon him, he would soon be a free man. and Counts "Freddie" and "Willy," if assured of commutation of the prison sentence awaiting them on the same terms, might return at once without fear of being compelled, for ever so short a time, to change their fashion of spoons.

Unashamed as the *Mignons* are, the osculatory exercises between the Kaiser and his bosom friends occurred frequently before large and distinguished audiences, at receptions, clubs, army and navy casinos and at the yacht races, with high officials, courtiers and their ladies looking on.

While the peculiar code of German manners might explain William's tenderness to the Hohenaus on the score of relationship, there seems no excuse for kissing Lynar, who is neither his cousin nor inviting to look upon.

The Hohenaus, as may be remembered, are the sons of William's uncle, the late Prince Albrecht of Prussia, Regent of Brunswick, but I leave it to the unbiased reader to judge whether such illegitimate cousinship

warrants the suspicious warmth of such tirades as these:

"Willy" (or "Freddie") "me boy, we are of the same flesh and blood," (smacking him on the lips) "to my heart," (another buss) "dearest boy," (busses him four or five times in succession) "for I love thee as a brother."

This, while two men of fifty, or thereabouts, stand locked in ardent embrace, patting each other on the shoulder and giving every evidence of the utmost satisfaction.

Disgusting, you say? Rather label it evidence of Cæsarian degeneracy.

Whatever the Kaiser's peculiarities, he has plenty of royal company. To mention only a few off-hand among his nearest blood relatives: There is Prince Frederick Leopold, repeatedly mentioned in these memoirs for his dastardly behavior to his mother.

Frederick Leopold began his career as a bully by joining the noble band of wife-beaters and by brow-beating everybody he came in contact with — everybody, save the Emperor.

In recent years, his sons, boys between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, had to be taken away from him for fear that he would slowly murder them to satisfy his Sadist tendencies.

Aside from the Hohenaus, two other sons of the late Prince Albrecht, offspring of his first marriage with Marianne of the Netherlands, are in disgrace. If not Princes of the blood they would undoubtedly keep Count Lynar company, and so would a brother or two of the Emperor of Austria, a Prince of Braganza — the fellow who got vulgarly "pinched"

by a London "bobby" on the eve of King Edward's coronation<sup>1</sup> — and the Sovereign of a certain tiny realm who married a beautiful American girl, the lady whose friendship for Isidor de Lara, the composer, gave rise to the peculiar play of words: *Ici dort De Lara*. (No, I won't say on whose boudoir door the *calembour* was written.)

Still there is no positive evidence that William knew more about the real character of his intimates than they considered opportune to exhibit before "the all-highest master."

And Major von Normann, whose strange influence over William was commented on in the first volume?

Who says that the Kaiser ever heard of Normann's moral turpitude previous to his friend's suicide?

Of course, he knew of the accusations against the late cannon king, Friederich Krupp, when, standing at his open grave, he declared that he was weeping for "the grandest, the noblest of men."

"The grandest," etc., took poison at the moment when the police of Corfu decided to issue a warrant for his arrest. Charge: Seduction in the Grotto Azzura; the names of the victims — by the way — did not terminate in the letter "a."

Still, what is a "*Dago*" warrant to Imperial Omniscience? William chooses not to believe a word of the "vile slander," launched against his "dearest Friederich," nor did he listen when a sprightly Bavarian Princess hinted rather broadly at "Phili's" *tête-à-tête* with Riedel. The pair were in a boat on

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<sup>1</sup> This precious specimen of royalty was of late reported to be betrothed to a rich American girl. Let's all hope that the story is untrue.

Starnberger Lake and Her Royal Highness ascertained her facts by the aid of a powerful spyglass. There is hardly anything a lady born in the purple will not stoop to if tickled by curiosity.

*Chacun à son goût* — the Kaiser chooses to be deaf and dumb and blind where his intimates' morals are concerned — but of being their accomplice he has never been convicted.

Suppose "dear Phili" is the reincarnation of the infamous *Chevalier* de Lorraine, organizer of the "League Against Women" <sup>1</sup> under Louis XIV, — William, on his part, never allowed Templars' absurdities and worse to interfere with his dynastic duties.

As to "Tütü" and "Willy," strange rumors were circulated at Court. Far from heeding the gossips, the Kaiser made these gentlemen Grand Crosses of the Sublime Order of Hohenzollern.

In 1901, "Phili's" brother, Count Frederick Botho, Major of Guard Dragoons, suffered the same misfortune as Lynar afterward. The army expelled him as a mangy dog, but the State's Attorney received instructions not to prosecute.

Perhaps Frederick Botho — like brother "Phili" — had been careful to retain certain letters; perhaps the Kaiser remembered the many fine entertainments he enjoyed at Liebenberg with money furnished by Frederick Botho's wife; at any rate, William remains an enigma, morally as well as mentally.

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\* The motto of this society was: "Let the ladies follow our example and the world will come to an end."

But one thing is certain: If, like, the Grand Dukes of Mecklenburg, the Kaiser possessed the "right of abolition," i. e., to throw out of any court of judiciary in his realms any charge or case he pleases, "Phili," "Freddie," "Willy," "Tütü" and the other *Mignons* would still be at the head of affairs in the Fatherland.

In conclusion, let me say that recent events have at last solved the mystery of the anonymous letter scandal mentioned at length in the preceding volumes.

The "Philies," "Freddies," "Jeanies," "Tütüs" and "Willys," if you please, started it. Their object? To wean the Kaiser away from *Frau* von Kotze and Countess Fritz Hohenau.

On the count of morality?

No.

On the plea of abnormality.

# THE KAISERIN





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Neues Palais

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CALIFORNIA

Note Paper—Potsdam Palace

Facsimile Signature of the Kaiserine

*Augusta Victoria*

4. 1911  
1911.10.10

July 05



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Neues Palais

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California

Note Paper—Potsdam Palace

Facsimile Signature of the Kaiserine

*Augusta Victoria*

instantly at her feet, for Victoria (the Auguste was added much later) had done Prussian diplomacy a great service. Not only was the probability of another British alliance by marriage now happily precluded, but the union between a Hohenzollern and a member of the discrowned House of Schleswig would also go far toward pacifying the latter and its branches in Russia and Great Britain. But in all other respects, save that of conspicuous natural aptitude for motherhood, the young girl proved a disappointment. She was awkward, plain, and presumptuous in a quiet way,—presumptuous with that hateful arrogance that distinguishes the “beggar on horseback,” as her future *belle-mère* used to say.

When Her Highness arrived at the Wildpark Station, which is only five minutes' walk from the Neues Palais, where her intended husband's parents, afterward Emperor and Empress Frederick, resided, several baggage-wagons awaited her, besides a royal coach. But there was scarcely a need for the vans, sent according to a custom of the Prussian Court. Indeed, all the Princess's belongings might have been carted to the Schloss on a wheelbarrow, for a rickety old trunk and a shawl-strap sufficed to hold her wardrobe, consisting of one costume each for the house, for dinner, and reception, besides the clothes she had on her back. The late Empress Augusta's Palace Dame, Countess Hacke, saw the outfit, and reported its paucity to the sovereign lady, not in an unfriendly spirit, but rather in support of Her Majesty's ideas respecting the annexations of 1864 and 1866. The old Kaiserin had no sympathy with the politics that led to the discrowning of the three Princes, near relatives at that, and the invalidation of the “Augustenburger's” rights. Indeed, I happen to know that, up to the very day of her death, Her Majesty never really ceased abhorring Bismarck as a rampant sacrilegist,

and time and again she told me that the double marriage between the Houses of Schleswig and Hohenzollern was her work, the Iron Chancellor's claims that he himself found and selected the "Holstein," notwithstanding. And when we come to consider it, it was eminently a woman's notion of "make-peace," this offer to compensate Duke Frederick for the loss of sovereignty by elevating his expatriated Princesses to positions of puissance and affluence,—one to be heiress to the German diadem, the other to become the wife of a princely Croesus, Frederick Leopold of Prussia. Bismarck caught at the suggestion not because he admired its spirit, but because the Empress handled it so cleverly as to make him think it was an idea of his own, and he agreed to it the more readily, as the royal girls seemed to answer his requirements as to physical fitness.

The man who drew up the marriage-contracts of Victoria and her sister died only a few years ago, and I have the story of the extraordinary proceedings from his own lips.

It appeared from his statements that the Prince of Augustenburg, who in 1863 assumed the title of Frederick VIII of Schleswig, had been reduced to abject poverty by his candidacy. After the peace of Nicholsburg, July 26, 1866, he retired to Coburg. He took a mean little house in that cheapest of Continental capitals, his wife and daughters made their own dresses, and the children were sent to public-school with the offspring of mere commoners, as the Duke could not afford a private tutor. Still, Frederick did neither forego his hopes of future greatness, nor did he tire of agitating all sorts of schemes for the re-establishment of his government, until, finally, the Empress Augusta and Queen Victoria combined their efforts to induce King William toward a compromise. Their endeavors proved



successful, as the King was anxious to have the Schleswig-Holstein question settled for good. Accordingly, a commission was appointed to which both the Hohenzollerns and Holsteins sent representatives.

Then and there it was that Duke Frederick waived all claims to and all rights in the Elbe duchies for the privilege of gaining two important sons-in-law,—the heir of the Red Prince, leader in the war of 1864, who drove him from his country, for his second daughter; the eldest son of Crown Prince Frederick William, who, by the victorious battle of Königgrätz, struck the name of Augustenburg from the list of sovereign houses, for Victoria. And as if that had not been sufficient to stamp these unions *mariages de convenance*, it was further stipulated that His Highness should not be obliged to furnish his daughters with a *dot*.

The day after Princess Victoria's inauspicious arrival at the Neues Palais, the Crown Princess happened to give a garden-party to the poor children of the neighborhood, when they were treated to chocolate and cakes and music and condescension; cheap things, it is true, but highly appreciated. Victoria had to assist in this charitable enterprise, and did so with good grace, for everybody's eyes were upon her; but when, at last, the children were dismissed, she ran to her apartments in hot haste, and, calling her maid, cried: "Off with this dress, quick, I am afraid I smell of poor people!"

Most probably she did, poor thing! I know I did, although I had not fondled half so many babies between the ages of one and four years as Her Highness; but the expression of disgust was nevertheless in bad taste, and exceedingly impolitic besides, for Victoria's attendant was an *attaché* of the royal household and forthwith blabbed about the incident in the "flunkies' own." And, like the vaporous thing it is, a story once descended to the kitchen

floor, quickly rises again to higher regions by virtue of its insignificant specific weight.

Prospective father-in-law "Unser Fritz" did not know whether to be angry or amused when the remark was repeated to him bright and early next morning by his valet; but the Crown Princess flew into one of her good-sized rages "at the impudence of the girl, whose petty pride," she said to her *intimus*, Count Seckendorff, "recalls those caricatures of royalty depicted in the memoirs of the Margravine of Baireuth. When I encounter such conduct in my adopted country," added Her Imperial Highness, "I always repeat to myself the words my ancestor, George III, appended to his first, minister-made address to the House of Commons: 'Born and educated in England, I glory in the name of Briton.'"

The purveyor of home scandal to Prince William was of course as alert in bringing the matter to his master's notice as the rest of the liveried washerwomen, but the young *Rittmeister* of Hussars, much against his wont, cut short the fellow by an impatient shrug of his shoulder, leaving him much in doubt whether he disapproved of gossip concerning his intended or shared the Princess's horror of poor folk.

Poor folk, indeed! The ducal family of Schleswig had one foot in the bankruptcy court for tens of years, and would be there still, head over heels, had not Prussia, in 1885, allowed its chief an annual pension of seventy-five thousand dollars. Previous to this settlement upon the Augustenburgers, and especially during the life-time of Duke Frederick, the unhappy pretender, they were in a really pitiable position for people in their station of life, residing alternately in Kiel, Coburg, and Dresden; that is, wherever their creditors would let them remain for any length of time.

About the first meeting between William and his wife a pretty story is told by many of the Kaiser's semi-official biographers. According to these accounts, it was at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Castle, that William first saw his future wife, when both he and Victoria were visiting their uncle, Prince Christian. If the word "met" were substituted for "saw," this version would be substantially true. As a matter of fact, the Princess was seated in a second-tier box of the Dresden Opera House with her father and mother, and was surrounded by retail merchants, small officials, and the like, when His Royal Highness accidentally noticed her. His adjutant desired to introduce him, but William refused "to mix with the *canaille*," a thing that could not be avoided if he climbed the stairs to pay his compliments to the ducal family. The Augusten-burgers heard of the remark, which at the time drew forth no end of comment at the Court of King Albert, and some of the august personages in that capital think the present Empress then and there experienced a change of heart which made her despise her own and every other lowly position; but while I will not dispute the fact that William's disdainful epigram made an impression on the untutored and ambitious Princess, I am convinced there was scarcely occasion for a reversal of sentiments: the daughter of Duke Frederick inherited her spleeny self-exultation from her mother as directly as the Kaiser did not get his either from his parents or grandparents.

The young Princess's arrogance was a topic of general conversation in Berlin long before her marriage, and caused disgraceful scenes at the time of her ceremonious entry into the capital on the wedding-day. As her splendid coach of gold, drawn by eight horses, rolled slowly through the Brandenburg gate amid the shouts of loyalists, small bands of riffraff jeered the future Empress with ribald reproaches.

"Another of the Augusta type" (meaning the well-hated spouse of William I),—"all bones and skin," they said.

"Just look at her dress,—one Thaler a yard!" This from the women.

"Pshaw!" vociferated another, "her costume was cut from one of Queen Victoria's cast-off petticoats!"

"That lace shawl," growled a lung-strong individual, "is surely an heirloom from the Hohenlohes; the Augustenburgers would never have been able to buy it."

"You mean, to owe for it," sneered several neighbors of the speaker.

The denizens of the Prussian capital have always held their Queens in the utmost contempt; even the greatest, or the only great one, Louise, was treated with jeers and derision almost up to the day of her fatal illness. Her many virtues and great good sense were not recognized until many years after she had been put to rest in the Charlottenburg mausoleum.

The remarks provoked guffaws of derision, and it looked for a while as if the proud procession would end in anything but glory; but the police soon intervened, and, by packing off a few of the lampooners of decayed royalty, cut short what promised to be a repetition of the ordeal that Carmen Sylva faced upon her arrival at Bucharest.

The lesson taught Princess William by these incidents was, however, not lost upon the young lady. During the first few years of her marriage, Her Royal Highness succeeded admirably in living up to her income, and not beyond it, but as early as 1885 (her nuptials were celebrated in February, 1881) good old Emperor William I was forced to send his Minister of the Royal House, Herr von Schleinitz, to his granddaughter-in-law to protest, in the interest of the exchequer, against her wanton extravagance.

"His Majesty desires me to recall to Your Royal Highness the fact that his own father and mother were compelled, after ascending the throne, to get along on the puny revenue allowed them during the life of Frederick William II," said this dignitary. "For ten years and more, Frederick William III and Queen Louise managed on a ridiculously small income in order to pay off the most pressing of their royal predecessor's debts. Queen Louise, the present Emperor's mother, who was having children in just such quick succession as you, madame, received scarcely one-fifth of the pin-money Your Royal Highness is allowed to draw, yet she never ran into debt, or lacked that dignity in outward appearance that the first lady of the land should command. Indeed, contemporary writers pronounced Queen Louise one of the best-dressed women of her time and a leader of fashion in the best sense."

"But," protested Princess William, "we are writing 1885 now, not 1797."

"All that has been considered, Your Royal Highness," said the Minister, respectfully but firmly, "and His Majesty, my exalted master, has come to the conclusion that things cannot continue in the style Your Royal Highness pleases to adopt. Once more the Empress Augusta, despite urgent calls for charity upon her purse, will come to your aid, but both their Majesties warn you that it will be for the last time. If you persist in living above your income (these are His Majesty's final words), the Minister of the Royal House will assume charge of your allowance and expenditure, and" (Herr von Schleinitz lowered his voice) "Your Royal Highness will not have twenty marks a month to bless yourself with, for the administration will absorb the entire revenue allowed Your Royal Highness by the grace of their Majesties of Germany and of England."

Herr von Schleinitz's words, here for the first time truthfully recorded, foreshadow to a certain extent the dangerous game Prince William played in the winter of 1888, when he tried to supersede his father, the amiable Frederick III that was to be, by brushing him aside with an ephemeral weapon, dug from musty state archives by the clever hand of Bismarck: "No Hohenzollern suffering from mortal malady shall be eligible to the crown," so it was proclaimed.

Who made that so-called house-law, or by what process of reasoning it became binding on the successors of the mythical originator, has never been positively settled. It was there one fine day, and the semi-official press gave it the benefit of its most ponderous type after the *Reichsanzeiger* of November 12, 1887, had pronounced the Prince Imperial's illness as cancer.<sup>1</sup>

"But my husband is not a sure candidate for death," cried the Crown Princess, when Professor von Bergmann endeavored to break the news to her.

"Your Imperial Highness is pleased to deceive yourself," said the doctor, blunt and cruel as German savant ever was; "as we feared, the blood of the Georges has done its worst."

Down came an imperial hand upon the professor's cheek, and with the fierce outcry: "Take this for your lying insolence," the Crown Princess threw open the folding-doors separating the anteroom from the corridor in the San Remo villa by a vigorous kick of her foot. Bergmann found

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<sup>1</sup> A note of a later date, by Countess Eppinghoven, says that Prince Bismarck, in February, 1892, denied before a tableful of dinner guests that this publication in the official gazette, for which he was responsible, was of political significance. He also denied, then and there, that a house-law like that quoted exists. The Countess thinks the house-law agitation originated with Prince William or his friends.

himself outside, and after this scene, Sir Morel Mackenzie assumed undisputed mastery of the royal death-chamber.

I have seen neither the box on the ear, nor the sweep of the royal leg,—the first that made history since the Regent of Orleans kicked his quondam preceptor, afterward Cardinal Dubois, “once each for the rogue, the pimp, the priest, the minister, and the archbishop,”—but the fact is thoroughly authenticated; Dr. Bergmann related it within my hearing, but was immediately dissuaded from ever repeating the story, “as it might hurt his standing in the army,” or even cause such scandal as to force him to resign his commission.

From my own observation at the Marble Palace, I know that the emphatic way in which his mother argued out of practical existence the state doctrine quoted upset all Prince William’s plans. Himself and wife were head over heels in debt, and had hoped to arrange their affairs satisfactorily by stepping into Frederick’s shoes without inconvenient delay. The energetic Britisher—thus the English Princess Royal was dubbed at the Prussian Court as soon as she began to show her mettle—spoiled it all, and politicians and creditors alike were bound to feel the consequences.

Prominent among the creditors was, at that time, the Countess Waldersee, daughter of the New York banker Lee and widow of Prince Frederick of Schleswig, one of Princess William’s many uncles who had the good taste of departing this life before he succeeded in squandering any considerable portion of the Lee millions. Her Ladyship, extremely wealthy, devout, influential, and, above all, clever with that cleverness styled, in Europe, distinctively American, had undertaken to steer her niece by marriage through the social Scylla and Charybdis besetting her career when she first came to Berlin, and William was delighted. The wife of General Waldersee was just the woman needed to coach

Auguste Victoria in a quiet and dignified way, without exciting suspicion, and, besides,—whether that was an afterthought or one of the main considerations, I would not like to decide,—the Countess always had such large amounts of ready cash at her command. As the then Grand-master, Herr von Liebenau, quaintly put it: “Her Excellency can draw a check for twenty or twenty-five thousand marks as easily as that amount can be spent in our *ménage*.” And Liebenau’s judgment in this matter must certainly be accepted as final, seeing that the disagreeable task of making both ends meet in the princely household fell to his lot during all the meagre years. That business was not a sine-cure, I warrant you, though presenting to a German courtier few, if any, novel features, for, like their cousins of England, heirs to the Prussian Crown have always been large borrowers. As Prince Royal, Frederick the Great “worked” all the monarchs in Christendom for loans, from Kaiser Charles VI to the Grand Turk and Louis XV, and his successor, afterward Frederick William II, owed ten millions of Thalers to the “Jews” of Berlin, Paris, and Vienna when the Sage of Sans Souci closed his eyes.

The present Emperor was an exception to the rule in so far as he selected his creditors among personal friends only. His name, I am reliably informed by one having had the very best opportunity for acquiring the correct facts, figured on the debit side of the Waldersee ledger with seven noughts at about the time the old Emperor was dying and his nearest of kin unable to live. And Princess William, likewise, had her private account with the Lee-Waldersees. Only twenty thousand dollars, it is true, but that meant twice her annual income. So the princely couple in the Marble Palace had the very best reasons for straining every point toward a speedy realization of their ambition. Debts of honor harassed each without the other’s knowledge, while neither



recognized obligations of loyalty toward the suffering father. William was scarcely twenty-nine years old, Auguste Victoria had hardly finished her thirtieth year, when the reign of ninety-nine days of agony came to an end, but, unlike the sixteenth Louis and Marie Antoinette, "the two did not fall on their knees together, and, with streaming tears, exclaim: 'O God, guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign.'"

## CHAPTER II

The Empress is not a pretty woman ; not even among daughters of Germany is she entitled to that distinction. The once awkward girl has developed into a large *Frau*, strong-limbed, square-footed, and broad-shouldered, as we meet them by the hundred in the capital, or in any town in the Fatherland, for that matter. She has small grayish-blue eyes, with light, scanty lashes and brows,—sincerest flattery could not call them beautiful, or even pleasing, especially as, for some reason or other, they appear slightly swollen three days out of four. Her arms are beautifully modelled, and white as alabaster, the hands well taken care of, but too large, and given to puffiness, a condition which constant massage forestalls to some extent, but not wholly.

If not under the surveillance of the multitude, Her Majesty walks like a knock-kneed person ; at all times she prefers to lean on somebody's arm, or on a piece of furniture, which tendency gives one an idea that her nether limbs are weak despite their superb outward development.

Up to some two years ago, when the Empress first began to show her age (she is only thirty-nine now, but looks forty-five), Auguste Victoria possessed real claims to beauty in her graceful shoulders and a finely-chiselled bosom.

When I first came to know the Kaiserin in the intimacy of her chamber, the whiteness of her skin had a fairly supernatural aspect, and as she stood, as was her wont to

do when disrobed, against the blue silken curtains, forming a canopy over her bed, with hair loosened and the official property smile for once abandoned, she might have been taken for the prototype of Elsa in all but face. For Elsa, I reckon, possessed large feet, like most of her German impersonators on the operatic stage. That fine figure, then so universally admired, was indeed very far from being a product of stays and powder, as some ladies of the aristocracy gave out, but a luminous reality to which the Kaiser was strongly attracted. During the first four or five years of her imperial life, Auguste Victoria might have adopted Queen Louise's corsetless costume without fear of offending the most artistic eye, and that after nursing six children!

Alas! that vanity should have induced the Kaiserin to spoil her figure, and complexion as well, by submitting to various kinds of flesh-reducing treatment, and by using all known sorts of cosmetics.

I dare say some chance observers will endeavor to correct my estimate of Her Majesty's feet, but in doing so these critics really compliment the royal shoemakers' perfect art; there are two of these functionaries, both natives of Vienna. As to the shoemakers of the Fatherland, Her Majesty would no sooner think of employing any of them than she would eat peas with her knife. While a man's number seven, American measure, might give the Empress supremest comfort, her special artists build for the imperial lady foot-gear intended to defy normal conclusions as to dimensions. The location of the heels, and the heels themselves, are marvels of misleading, and the material and ornamentation help to make the boots or shoes a composite at once graceful and slender.

Her Majesty pays from a hundred to a hundred and fifty florins for these works of art, which are the only items of

toilet she hates to cast off, and, indeed, wears until brushes and creams of all sorts fail to bring back waning lustre.

They are beautiful to look at (the very envious must admit that), but, oh, the pains they give their vain owner! The Empress's broad face, though at times slightly disfigured by freckles, would not be displeasing except for the very red nose, conspicuous whenever she appears in public. And that red nose is only one of the ugly results of feet screwed out of all original resemblance. I am convinced of it, because I never saw Her Majesty with a red nose at home, even at periods when she was suffering from a cold. That additional blot appears only when least wanted, at the theatre, on the throne, on horseback, though there is really small excuse for wearing the tightest of boots—we call them "Scotch boots" in commemoration of a pleasant custom they had in the land of kilts and bagpipes to promote confessions in criminal proceedings—under the long-flowing robe. Still, in mounting or dismounting, the royal feet might show, and Her Majesty desires to be on the safe side with respect to physical charms and shortcomings.

To sum up: Her Majesty is a tall woman of imposing carriage, with a face that is weak rather than intellectual. Having learned how to smile upon the populace and to affect a certain dignified air in public, she is always sure of a "good reception," as the newspapers say, for her condescension, though studied and ever mindful of the desired end, has in it a ring of true courtesy, no matter what people, who, like myself, are behind the scenes, may think of it.

That Napoleon I would have been a great actor if Fate had not destined him for the mighty conqueror he was, a learned Englishman, borrowing the main idea from the Duke of Wellington, undertook to prove in a recent book,

a copy of which I found, several mornings in succession, upon the side-table near the Empress's bed while His Majesty was absent on one of his usual junketings. Can it be that the royal lady means to still more perfect herself in the noble art of pretending qualities and habits foreign to her nature or disposition? Considering Auguste Victoria's past successes in the matter of dissimulation, the undertaking seems quite unnecessary. Let me cite only one of many instances of this sort:

As the eighth Henry's daughter posed as the virgin Queen, so does the German Empress pose as the ideal *Hausfrau*; but while the first succeeded only in deluding the unthinking, the present august lady has tricked the entire civilized world into crediting her with fanciful domestic virtues. I am told that one cannot open a magazine or a newspaper, printed either in Europe, America, Asia, or Africa, not to forget Australia, without encountering some such article as "The Kaiserin as a Mother," "The German Empress Investigating her Kitchen," "Auguste Victoria Superintending her Linen Chest." Books of travel, the A, B, C for the young, and religious tracts alike teem with allusions to Her Majesty's facilities in the line of sewing, child-bearing, darning, and plain cooking.

As a matter of fact, the Empress has visited the lower regions of her residential castles where the very bad indigestibles that grace the imperial table are prepared, but once in her life, in the fall of 1890, and on that same occasion she deigned to look into the department where the linen is kept, but never more.

It was a great and wonderful event, however, while it lasted, and the Royal Housekeeper, Baroness von Larisch, and her host of white-capped and ditto-aproned girls and women probably passed an hour of supreme anxiety lest the great lady should know enough to find fault with things





as they were. In this unpleasant anticipation they were luckily disappointed, however, and aside from the "cheap copy" it made for the press, generally despised but often appealed to by royalty, the visit resulted merely in a single recommendation: It was ordered and decreed by Her Imperial and Royal Majesty that thereafter the all-highest table-linen be marked in a different-colored thread from the most gracious bedclothes. From time immemorial, table-coverings and sheets alike have been adorned with a red crown at the Prussian Court. The all-highest warrant changed that state of things, and red for the imperial couch, yellow or white for the royal board, became obligatory. The idea was a good one, denoting at once delicacy of perception and a certain sense of the elegancies of life; but as the chance appearance of a single butterfly does not necessarily bring summer in its wake, so is the Empress's sole descent to the kitchen floor hardly an evidence of her mastery of domestic concerns.

The only thing about the house which really interests Her Majesty is the daily menu, and that its composition be agreeable to her as well as to the Emperor. To that end the "*Speisenfolge*" proposed is placed on her dressing-table nightly, so she may strike out or add anything she likes.

But while not a *Hausfrau* in the accepted sense of the word, Auguste Victoria unfortunately inherited from her mother certain disagreeable traits that in a more or less pronounced degree are found in the majority of German women, qualities dignified as positive virtues by many, and which poets and like irresponsible persons not unfrequently laud to the skies. Her Majesty is peevish, unjust, and petty in the treatment of her retinue, the very best reason why the royal household in the Neues Palais or Schloss is as little free from vexations and even domestic brawls as



other institutions of the kind, be they extensive or small, in Berlin, Potsdam, or anywhere in the Fatherland for that matter.

Sprung from non-puissant stock and reared in comparative poverty, Auguste Victoria seems to abhor the very conditions that gave her discomfort in younger days. In Her Majesty's eyes an untitled servant is of no more consequence than a beggar, and that poverty and uncleanness are necessarily synonymous terms is one of her fixed ideas. As her discrowned and unhappy sister Carlotta, sometime Empress of Mexico, entered upon her exalted duties as sovereign lady in a semi-barbarous country with but one thought, viz. : that of enforcing a crazy set of etiquette rules, so is the German Empress swayed by one domineering notion : she imagines that to assure her own aggrandizement it is but necessary to humble her inferiors.

Foreigners visiting the Fatherland have often told me how surprised and shocked they were upon encountering in the *ménage* of well-to-do and outwardly refined people most disgusting wrangles, charges, and counter-charges between masters and servants. "All valets are thieves, and all barons swindlers," is a saying *en vogue* in the *salons* and *Bierstuben* alike, and it may be added : every German *Hausfrau* is a Tartar in her own particular sphere.

In the majority of Berlin households those *obligato* squabbles begin in the bright and early morning, and the Empress would not be German unless she followed that fashion and kept up a continuous performance till night. Every nation, you must know, boasts but one sort of clay for high and humble, and loftiness of station does not count much when a glove-buttoner is missing or a glass of seltzer has been allowed to flatten.

It is on such occasions that the Princess of Meiningen's sweeping criticism of her sister-in-law, viz. : that "Dona"

(that is Her Majesty's pet name in the family) "is the most arrogant and pretentious Princess on any throne in Christendom," is borne out in its most disagreeable aspects. A peep into the Empress's apartments on almost any morning of the year will explain.

Usually the day's scolding and annoyance is ushered in by the finding of certain memoranda on slips of paper, or visiting cards, which the chamber-women discover when making up the Empress's bed. There are strict orders that these notes must be placed on Her Majesty's toilet-table without delay, for they are in the all-highest hand-writing and pencilled to assist the royal memory. I shudder when I think what a mercenary in the Court-marshal's office could do with some of these brief *feuilletons*,—records of imperial weakness and malice. How the autograph fiends would fight and bid for them at Christy's!

"Fifty guineas for Her Majesty's complaint as to '*His Majesty's* ill-temper on the eve of Bismarck's dismissal.'"

"One hundred guineas for 'the Kaiser's remarks on the Duchess of Aosta in his sleep,' taken down verbatim by his august spouse, who sat up in bed horrified." For such and similar affairs those tell-tale "mems" register in springy, excited monosyllables and unsteady letters—once in a while. And then, of course, they were written down to aid Her Majesty in making "copy" for her diary; not at all were they intended for the Court-marshal's eyes, but they come to him just the same, in waste-baskets, crumpled and torn, or riding upon the sharp tongues of his numerous spies and flatterers. The notes indited for that functionary's benefit usually specify some misconduct on a servant's part in this style:

"Spoon tasted of silver powder,"

or,

"Nolte appeared to have been drinking last night."

Nolte is one of Her Majesty's *Kammerdiener* (*valet de chambre*), and a man more sober and industrious one cannot find among a thousand of his class. Still, he may unwittingly have given offence to the all-exacting royal lady, and, thinking it over in bed, while perhaps waiting for her husband to come home, she put down the first accusation that occurred to her. After she herself got through scolding poor Nolte, he was to be bullied, in addition, by his superior officer, Baron von Lyncker. The latter gentleman, who is general overseer of the servants' hall, wastes at least an hour of his valuable time daily listening to explanations of these memoranda on the part of Her Majesty, and the investigations following, fruitless most of them, last even longer.

That the Empress has recourse to written indictments of the sort would indicate either that her memory is very bad, or that the transgressions complained of are extremely slight, or both, but to get at the actual causes underlying this strange freak it is necessary to carry our researches a little further. In doing so we shall find that the Kaiser is a veritable fiend for inditing notes of all sorts after retiring; the Empress merely imitates this habit, which she probably mistakes for an attribute of greatness.

The "mems" disposed of, other vexations are rife. Like many of her sex, "Dona" would rather read forbidden books than the sort that languishes on every drawing-room table, but, of course, the Kaiser must know nothing of that. Imagine the job of keeping anything from William, whose bump of meddlesomeness is so abnormally developed! Surely, no one will blame the Empress for innocently deceiving a husband who would as lief go through her pockets as send a bill to the Reichstag without notifying his Chancellor. She fools him constantly,—has to do it, in order not to die of *ennui*,—and does it quite cleverly,

too, by finding new hiding-places for her Marcel Prévosts and Heinrich Lees all the time, but, unfortunately, Her Majesty is apt to forget overnight the exact locations of her literary treasures. That being the case, and it happens quite frequently, her chambermaids and attendants at the toilet come in for a dreaded half-hour of scolding and insinuation, the Kaiserin assuming, as a matter of course, that one of the women or girls took the book to read, or for a worse purpose even: they might want to turn it over to her husband's Court-marshal!

The poor females are dragged from their breakfast or their work to give detailed accounts of what they have been doing for the last twenty-four hours, where they keep their valuables, etc. Likewise, they are required to furnish their august mistress with views on literature held by themselves and by people nearest to them, the inquisition usually winding up with a peremptory demand that they must find the lost article within a certain time or suffer dismissal.

The same process is gone through when any other thing is lost or mislaid, be it valuable, be it not. Mistrust, indeed, appears to be the Empress's predominant failing, and an inclination to contribute to the happiness of those serving her never seems to enter her mind except on certain set occasions like Christmas and birthdays.

Like her forbidden books, the Empress's private letters are a constant source of annoyance to her retinue. Having a habit of leaving the most intimate missives lying around on toilet-tables and in bandboxes, the Kaiserin never hesitates to accuse the persons on duty in the rooms of reading them, and of spying upon her, when at last she recollects the incident; but as such scenes are matters of daily occurrence, the host of officials and waiting-women deem them hardly worth talking about. Direct abuse offered to

Nolte, or his comrades, *Herr Lück* and *Herr Hoepfner*, is, however, always sure of causing more or less gossip, for these men represent the very cream of stewardship and are generally looked upon as models of their kind. All three are fine-looking fellows, and their tasteful dress of black and silver appears never more than a day old. That they understand their polite duties to a nicety goes without saying.

Why, then, does our august mistress quarrel with these worthies? Ten reasons for one! To-day the *Kammerdiener* may announce breakfast, perhaps, by the Kaiser's special order, a minute or two before the imperial lady is quite ready; and, again, he may be compelled to submit that the restive *carossiers* before Her Majesty's carriage cannot be persuaded to stand still much longer.

Disagreeable as these reminders are for the time being, even a lady who in official language figures as the all-mightiest ought to receive them with becoming composure. Not so Auguste Victoria. She forgets that *Herr Nolte* or *Herr Lück* is merely performing his duty; confounding cause and effect, she treats the unhappy attendant as the wilful disturber of her plans, and abuses him roundly, even in the presence of her maids or occasional visitors. It is a cowardly thing to do, and I have seen these men tremble under this unjust treatment and bow half a foot lower than etiquette prescribes, to hide their pale lips.

In other royal households there are favorites and black sheep among the denizens of the servants' hall; not so in the Neues Palais. *Kammerdiener* and *Kammerlackei*, *mattresse de Maison*, chambermaid and scrub-woman alike, suffer at the hands of a haughty and inconsiderate mistress, and officials or domestics able to report at the evening reunions that they escaped chiding during the past twelve hours are congratulated by the rest upon their singular good fortune.

Six *Kammerlackeien* (chamber flunkies) are engaged in waiting upon the august lady every day in the year; on special occasions their number is doubled and trebled; but what a time they have! Although selected for their special fitness to perform the work demanded of them, none seems able to give satisfaction. "Jarbot presented the tea awkwardly," "Dombrowsky failed to bring a correct answer from X. Y.," "The gloves of Schiller were unclean," "Gehrke's shoes make a dreadful noise when he walks," read some of the memoranda in the Kaiserin's handwriting that were fished from *Herr* von Lyncker's waste-basket within a week's time.

And if men-servants fare no better, the female part of the retinue is certainly not bedded on roses. It is an open secret that *Frau* von Larisch, who formerly superintended the royal household, came from Her Majesty's rooms more often crying than in a joyful mood, and the wardrobe-women, *Frau* Schwerdtfeger and *Fräulein* Gleim, the busiest mortals in the Empire, by the way, rarely pass a day without getting into a row, for whatever goes wrong in their department, they are held responsible; whether they misinterpret Her Majesty's intentions with respect to a new mode of hair-dressing, or whether the Vienna tailor failed to fit a gown or to finish it in time, it is all the same: Schwerdtfeger and Gleim are hauled over the coals while they are hot.

Alas, and alack, for the chimeras of this world! Common folks have troubles of their own, and, piqued by a thousand and one vexations and discomforts, torment others into a like unhappy state; it is a detestable yet not unpardonable habit; but what about the rich and mighty causing gloom and dejection for the mere pleasure of the thing?

Her Majesty is a very religious woman, and it is but natural that she commands her people to attend divine service

on Sundays. With this wish the great majority would gladly conform, but for the fact that they have absolutely no time for their devotions. The men and women must be at their Majesties' beck and call until the very second they drive out; that is, up to 9.45 A.M. Now, as service commences at ten o'clock, as no vehicles are obtainable, and the nearest church is an hour's distance, all attempts to hear a sermon at a common place of worship are out of the question. So Her Majesty decided to arrange for a special service to be held at the Palace, and we ladies of the Court received the agreeable commission to report truants. It is a disgusting duty, but we have to follow orders, and most unpleasant contentions arise when our Grand-mistress, Countess Brockdorff, takes a hand in the game by rising at an early hour and watching things from her window, unknown to anybody. In that case not only the absentees get into trouble, but also we, who fail to blab on them. Upon Her Excellency's denunciation, myself and a poor chambermaid were up for a scolding once, and while I was inventing excuses for Pauline the best way I could, the girl burst out: "May it please Your Majesty to remember that this going to church costs us an hour of sleep."

"And when do you have to rise in order to get through with your work and attend service?" demanded the Empress, raising her voice.

"At five o'clock, Your Majesty."

"That is not so bad."

"No," said the girl, "not for those who idle from one year's end to the other."

This pert answer might have resulted in Pauline's dismissal, had she not immediately sacrificed a round five-mark piece for Auguste Victoria's church-building fund. Countess Brockdorff had already obtained leave to bounce

her, but that act of generosity saved her head. The Kaiserin cannot be angry long with a person who contributes a brick to some new church, but members of the household who refuse to be bled have an unhappy time of it. The plate goes round three, four, or five times per annum, and the amounts bestowed are carefully recorded to speak for or against the different parties, as the case might be. And that happens in a house where the servants are not only badly paid, but must needs forego the greater part of the presents domestics in ordinary establishments receive on stated occasions.

The newspapers annually indulge in a great ado about the grand Christmas celebrations in the Neues Palais and the Schloss; they tell "how their Majesties try to find out the wishes of their meanest employee to gratify them in truly royal style." Fiddlesticks! If a chambermaid receives two handkerchiefs or a cotton petticoat, and a courier a pair of three-mark gloves, he and she consider themselves mightily well taken care of by their Majesties. Time and again I have seen my mistress's antechamber filled with articles that half a dozen stores sent on approval, and from which she desired to select something for a retiring servant who was about to embark on the sea of matrimony. In the end a lamp or a china coffee service was chosen, but never a thing exceeding twenty marks in price. And it took Auguste Victoria three or four days to come to that decision!

Unfortunately, the august lady is much less tardy when determining upon discontinuing her people's services. Sometimes, for no reason whatever, she takes a sudden dislike to persons and then she will not rest until they are discharged. So it happened that the nurse of little Prince Augustus, a girl of twenty-five, Emma Rüter by name, received orders to quit in January, 1891.



The young woman, daughter of a preacher in Westphalia, had been attached to the nursery for eight years; she loved the children and was beloved by them. Both Majesties had expressed satisfaction with her work on divers occasions, and Emma fondly imagined that she was fixed for life, especially when on Christmas-day the Empress had given her Prince Augustus's picture, bearing the all-highest autograph, together with some pious motto.

When the notice of dismissal came, Emma went at once to Countess Brockdorff to ask for an explanation, but Her Excellency refused to enter into details. "I am acting under Her Majesty's instructions." That was all she would say.

Five minutes later the girl came running into the nursery, with dishevelled hair and staring eyes. She threw herself on the floor, and her moans attracted half the household. The doctors said wounded pride and disappointment had caused her to be temporarily deranged. She was sent to an asylum. A week later poor Emma was a raving maniac. She died in a strait-jacket at the end of the year.

I asked Countess Brockdorff, Count Eulenburg, and Baron Lyncker why this girl had been discharged. All three had but praises for her, all three regretted the sad end of so worthy a person, none of the three knew what prompted Her Majesty's displeasure. She probably did not know herself.

The Kaiser knew what he was doing when he allowed Poultney Bigelow to spread his (the Kaiser's) reports about life in the Neues Palais over the pages of newspapers and magazines. These stories of imperial unpretendingness and democracy make good reading, particularly so because of Bigelow's affectation of having seen and heard

with his own eyes and ears the things he talks about, while as a matter of fact the gifted American is no more intimately acquainted with the ins and outs of the royal *ménage* than the last of penny-a-liners. I have made Mr. Bigelow welcome at the Neues Palais repeatedly, and once or twice heard His Majesty speak of him as a "person having the *entrée* to a lot of respectable white paper,"—a Bismarckian phrase with an adjective thrown in; but as to this literary man's claims of extraordinary ascendancy over other biographers, that is all nonsense. As a visitor at Court he enjoyed even less freedom than most others who come armed with the endorsement of family ties and titles, for while their Majesties may unbend occasionally, very occasionally, before a relative,—and they are kin to all the great houses in the world excepting the Grand Turk,—they could never afford to ask a mere "gentleman" to pot-luck. On the contrary, they will always maintain the lustre of divine inaccessibility under the cloak of affableness and extreme civility when associating with a friend not their equal. Mind, I do not blame Mr. Bigelow for the many untruths he published respecting the Berlin Court; if his statements are not correct, they are at least agreeable, and that he is at best a most superficial observer has probably never struck "the man in black." This latter designation I borrow from the servants' hall *patois*; in a house where every male wears either livery or uniform, a person in civilian clothes is bound to acquire a nickname descriptive of this peculiarity.

But to return to poor Schwerdtfeger and Gleim. Of all domestics in Her Majesty's service, these women are worked the hardest. They have practically not a minute to themselves, as the description of the Kaiserin's daily habits in a later chapter will show, and even their night's rest is often interfered with by the employer's uncertain

and whimsical ways. I remember, to cite only one instance, that, during a certain night in the beginning of June, 1893, the entire household of the Neues Palais was alarmed by the announcement that a few hours hence, at 7.45 A.M., Her Royal Highness, the Crown Princess of Sweden, would arrive at Wildpark station.

The Kaiserin had no sooner heard the news than I was commanded to have Schwerdtfeger and Gleim called, in order to finish a reception-dress originally billed to make its first appearance on the following Sunday. The women accordingly got out of bed, and, with the aid of several hastily-summoned seamstresses, completed the job by 5.30 A.M., being not a little proud of their achievement. But if they expected a word of praise, or even a gracious smile for their trouble, they were soon disenchanted. The Kaiserin had changed her mind on the question of toilets, and the new dress being pushed aside, half a dozen others were tried on in succession, meeting the same fate, until, at last, a message from the Court-marshal reminded Her Majesty that time waits upon no one. A quick decision was now made, and the Empress sat down to have her hair dressed. That procedure took up another ten minutes of precious time, and was only just concluded when the Kaiser's valet knocked at the door to say that his master was waiting.

"Tell His Majesty that, owing to the confounded tardiness of *Frau* Schwerdtfeger and *Fräulein* Gleim, my toilet is somewhat delayed," cried the Empress, in response.

Of course, the driven and slandered women had to pocket the insult, and the Kaiser was regaled with a repetition of the oft-heard story of their unsuitableness and inadequacy, during the drive to the station. It was not exactly news to him; he has to stomach that sort of recital every time his wife is late, but that morning's

dose was probably liberal out of all proportions, for, as he jumped from the carriage, I heard him say: "*Verfluchtes Volk; warum machst Du nicht einen Kladderadatsch?*" In English: "Why don't you kick the whole damned gang out?"

"By God, I will, the very next time you are made to wait on their account," replied the Empress, as she proceeded to thank the assembled public and officials for their hurrahs and bows, with the sweetest smile imaginable, and then stepped over to where I was standing with several other *Hofdamen*. As each of us made haste to assure Her Majesty that she looked not only well, but positively beautiful, her good humor continued, and everybody seemed happy despite the severe words that had been spoken,—severe words and hard language for an imperial couple, though not the hardest by far one hears at the Berlin Court, as both Majesties are wont to interpolate their speech to the servants with frequent "By Gods," "*Verfluchts,*" and "*Verdammts.*"

Referring to this habit, an English woman visiting us once cited Lord Lauderdale's clever *mot* of "mud in silk stockings," but I cannot agree with Her Ladyship in this out-and-out denunciation, for blasphemy and "cuss" words of the lighter calibre are part and parcel of a German's every-day speech, and only foreigners take serious offence at the habit to which men and women alike are slaves.

Contrary to German notions, the Empress shares the conjugal couch with her husband. They sleep in a large brass bedstead, very modern and entirely unlike the sort of furniture romantic persons associate with royalty's boudoirs. The Neues Palais, the Berlin Schloss, Wilhelmshöhe, and other castles where the imperial couple reside alternately, or occasionally only, have all been equipped with commodities of the same English pattern since the present

Kaiser's enthronization. "To the museums with my grandfather's field-bed and Queen Louise's three-foot mahogany couch. I want a resting-place where I may stretch myself without fear of falling out," was one of the first of Emperor William's commands recorded in the House-marshal's journal of June, 1888. And all who have seen the ancient chattels, venerable but hard, beautifully modelled but dangerously narrow, will forgive the reputed spendthrift for his act of seeming extravagance which the public credited to the Kaiser's at one time strong Anglo-manian views.

In the Berlin and Potsdam residences their Majesties' joint bed-chamber has two entrances,—one opening upon the Emperor's suite of apartments, the other upon Auguste Victoria's living rooms. The hour of rising being settled before retiring, the wardrobe man and woman, respectively, at the time given, knock on the door nearest which their august employer sleeps, and if no response is received, call out to him or her. More often than not the servants are required to go through this performance three and four, and even six times; but whether that be actually necessary, or merely a concession to Prussian tradition, I cannot say. Under the present regime, you must know, everything about the palace and the people in it is regulated according to customs and practices introduced by Frederick the Great, and there is a legend that the hero of the Seven Years' War was an early riser by compulsion only. His *Kammerhusar* was obliged to fairly drag him from his couch.

At the stroke of 6.30, 7, or 7.30 o'clock their Majesties emerge from their room. The Kaiser, in pajamas and sporting a jaunty cap, makes at once for his bath, while the Empress, clad only in a woollen wrapper and heelless slippers, ascends to the nursery, where her youngest little ones sleep under care of three or four maids.

If none of the children require special attention at that moment, the Kaiserin soon returns to the lower floor, where the *Bettfrau* (chamber-woman) awaits her with the stereotyped announcement that the bath is ready and has the prescribed temperature of twenty-eight to twenty-nine and a half degrees. The Empress thereupon examines the thermometer swimming in the basin, and if it bears out the statement, dismisses the attendant, for such are Her Majesty's prejudices implanted by her frugal bringing-up on the one hand, and her aversion to coming into personal contact with untitled servants on the other, that she cannot bear the presence of a trusted maid when most women would be only too glad to have one. Neither does Her Majesty require anybody's services during the drying process, and when, after ten or fifteen minutes, assistance is summoned, the women find the Kaiserin attired in a morning-gown and ready to have her hair dressed. That, of course, is quite an easy task so early in the morning, when only the hair that actually grows upon Her Majesty's head requires looking after, there being just sufficient to make a little knot on top.

If the Kaiser and Kaiserin intend to go for a drive immediately after breakfast, as is frequently the case, the older children are ordered down to kiss their mother and read a chapter from some devotional book before her. It is a pretty custom, that lacks not impressiveness, and even the lower domestics, who, working in the corridor, cannot help observing the scene in the dressing-room, are deeply moved by it, but stern reality only too often interferes with its proper conclusion.

"Wheez!" goes the speaking-tube. The *Kammerdiener* of His Majesty announces to the *Kammerdiener* of Her Majesty that his master has been pleased to enter the breakfast-room, or to step down to the Apollo Hall on the first floor, where sometimes the early repast is served.

The effect the message invariably produces would be amusing if the poor maids were not the scapegoats. Empress, Princes, and domestics all fly and flutter about like so many frightened chicks; the children are instantly dismissed, and Her Majesty's sharp reprimands spur the anxious women to hasty effort.

"The Kaiser is waiting!" It sounds to those who know him best almost like news of a serious ailment or misfortune threatening the head of the government.

At any rate, the Empress usually manages to catch up with her august lord within five or six minutes at the very latest, and the Fatherland is once more safe.

Even their worst enemy, the Prince of Reuss-Greiz-Kranichfeld-Gera-Lobenstein, etc., Henry XXII, he of the Elder Branch, cannot charge the Emperor and Empress of Germany with being gourmets. Though the breakfast consists of four or five courses, including meats, eggs, different kinds of breads and cakes, stewed fruits and marmalades, refined taste would find little of it palatable, grease and the frying-pan being too much in evidence.

Unless the Emperor is free to take her for a walk or drive, the Kaiserin devotes herself to her children after breakfast. They promenade in the park together or amuse themselves in-doors with readings or games, and romance-spinning being one of Her Majesty's strong points, the boys and the little daughter never grow weary listening to the old tales of Grimm and Andersen. But soon, only too soon for the youngsters, the various governors of the puny Royal Highnesses send word, in the most submissive language to be sure, but having a ring of the peremptory nevertheless, that it is time to begin with the lessons. Expressions of regret all round, prayers for just one more glimpse into fairy-land, for permission to take a spin on the bike

or look after the ponies,—all chattering at once, kisses, embraces, tears even ; but a word from the Kaiserin's lips settles the whole litter : "I will tell papa." And the striplings that may rule empires and command battles in a dozen years or so, scatter after a hasty good-bye.





### CHAPTER III

Those of my readers who have an intimate knowledge of Court life in general and of the consummate luxuries which, for instance, the great English aristocrats and American millionaires enjoy at their homes, will be loath to believe me when I say that the Emperor and Empress of Germany share the services of numerous attendants to their bodily wants with the general public, indeed with everybody able to pay their not exorbitant fees. It is only within the last year or so that the Emperor learned to shave himself; up to then a Potsdam barber, dignified by the title of *Hofbarbier*, who keeps a common and somewhat dirty shop on the market-place of that town, waited upon His Majesty twice each day to tickle his chin and scrape his cheeks.

That one of the Kaiser's twoscore or thereabouts of body-flunkies might study the gentle art and replace the public tormentor, seems to have never entered any one's head, despite the fact that some fifteen hundred hired persons, among them eight hundred liveried servants, lie awake nights, in and about the royal residence, thinking of ways and means to lighten their august master's and mistress's burdens and to contribute to their happiness.

As a matter of fact, the Hohenzollerns are like the *nouveaux riches*: they do not know the meaning of luxury and personal comfort. The grandfather of the present Kaiser insisted upon screwing down his lamp every time

he left the library to go to dinner or attend the theatre, although he disliked very much the odor that naturally developed. Still, he could stand this annoyance better than the thought of wasting so much precious kerosene at a mark per gallon. The crazy little elevator in the historical palace Unter den Linden, where the first William lived with his Empress, was built only in the year 1880, when the Kaiser was eighty-three and the Kaiserin sixty-nine years of age, and when, moreover, the physicians had positively forbidden their distinguished patients to mount stairs.

While William II has done away with the public barber nuisance of late, he employs a Berlin colleague of that gentleman to "set up" and curl his mustachios into a heavenward direction day by day. This fellow is due at the palace at five, six, or seven o'clock every morning, receiving special orders when to appear the previous evening. It happens quite often, too, that he is wanted at an earlier hour than the schedule trains run; in that case a royal carriage and pair bring him from the capital post-haste.

Now one may imagine this beard-dresser is the possessor of some patent method, or of particularly dexterous fingers; but he is not. His particular "trick" is practised by nearly all the high-class tonsorial artists in the Fatherland, and any half-witted *Kammerdiener* should be able to master it after a day or two; yet ignorance of a valet's real serviceableness forbids a trial, and incidentally causes no end of loss of time, trouble, and expense. But these are minor considerations compared with other eventualities, the principal among them that of tale-bearing.

A person in the lower walks of life making daily visits to an imperial palace, and to its intimate chambers at that, can hardly be expected to keep his observations to himself, and, moreover, to disappoint his ordinary customers,

who, as a matter of course, will ply him with questions innumerable of what he hears and sees; he cannot help spreading that familiarity that breeds contempt.

And if that be true of the Kaiser's outside body-attendants, must it not apply with even greater force to shop-recruited servants that wait upon Her Majesty?

Some time ago I was shocked to hear retailed in Berlin's polite society circles a story about the Kaiserin's well-rounded knees and a habit she has of pressing them against those of the person sitting opposite her. How do you suppose a statement of that character can leak out, except by the channels intimated? The Queens of Prussia, it is true, are not quite so chary of their limbs as those of Spain, who, officially at least, must be legless; but the Empress is certainly an exceedingly modest woman, and nothing in her public conduct can possibly have occasioned such comment, however truthful it may be.

Gossip from the servants' hall, you say? That is entirely out of the question. Our royal domestics are far too fond of their bread-and-butter, hard as it is, to imperil their position and the advancement and pension in store and connected with it. The names of the tale-bearers, I wager, are on record in the Berlin or Potsdam city directories under such headings as "Massage," "Chiropodist," "Accoucheur," etc., for people of that class are constantly going and coming at the Kaiser's Court, and that very circumstance assures them a tremendous clientele of well-to-do busybodies at once eager to worm out and spread outrageous personal tittle-tattle about the all-highest in the land.

I can well imagine *Frau Commerzienrath von Cohn* or *Frau Kommissionsrath Meyer*, their ample charms distributed over a velvet *fauteuil*, and with one naked foot in the lap of *Herr Reichelt*, nail-polisher-in-ordinary to Her

Majesty and the Berlin Four Hundred, prod that unfortunate to disgorge the very latest small talk of royalty *en déshabillé*.

Can he, with his eye to business, refuse to entertain these ladies, if only by innuendo? It is not so much the fact that the Empress employs him as that there is but one Empress in Germany, while the woods are full of Cohns and Meyers. Her Majesty requires his services two or three times per week, paying him ten marks and fare for each trip; but what is that compared with the many three-mark fees that gossip-hunting bankers' wives and daughters, actresses and kept women, hold in readiness for his asking?

Though the Kaiserin has twenty-four handmaidens, besides her staff of titled ladies, to look after her wants, she is obliged to call on Frau Scheibner, of Friedrich Strasse, Berlin, whom anybody can hire at the rate of three marks an hour, every time she wants to be massaged. I have already mentioned the fact that Her Majesty objects to employ assistance after the bath; her most trusted maids and women, and among them several that have been in the body-service for many years, are never allowed to see the Kaiserin in the altogether, and if any of the female retinue happens to enter a chamber while Her Majesty is disrobing, or only partly dressed, the sovereign lady becomes very angry and turns the frightened attendant out in the quickest order possible, insinuating all sorts of things. Yet the Scheibner woman was engaged for her delicate office on the mere statement of newspaper articles describing her success in ridding a certain well-known singer of superfluous flesh.

And right here I approach an almost limitless chapter,—that of Auguste Victoria's inordinate vanity.

"I wonder if Solomon the Wise ever knew a person half so vain as my granddaughter-in-law," the late Empress

Augusta used to say, adding, with a smile: "Of course he did, else why should the authorship of the Ecclesiastes, with its quaint truism, 'All is vanity,' be imputed to him?"

At about the time when the public prints echoed the praises of Frau Scheibner for having turned a lady, who as Martha looked uncommonly plump, into a lithe and winsome Marguerite, the Emperor became enamored with what is called on the continent the Princess of Wales figure,—a long waist and slender bust. And being always anxious to cotton to her husband's fitful tastes, and, it seems to me, being even apprehensive of endangering her position if at any time she were unable to please William's eye, the Kaiserin would not rest until means for bringing about a radical change in her own appearance had been discovered. The glorious bosoms that until then were her pride had to be reduced, the well-proportioned fulness of her lower torso was to decrease! When the Empress told Countess Brockdorff and myself of this contemplated vandalism, we begged hard that she reconsider her decision, and after much pleading Her Majesty agreed to it, but the same evening ordered her woman of the bed-chamber, *Frau von Haake*, to help her find a flesh-reducer. What else could this complaisant creature do but smile assent and try to carry out the command? While inborn modesty forbade her, under ordinary circumstances, to read any paper more worldly than her mistress's own organ, the pious *Reichsbote*, the good lady sent to the city for all the wicked sheets that *pfennigs* and *marks* can buy, but, on examining the advertising columns, found nothing suitable except *réclame* for time-honored Banting. And that would never do, for Her Majesty is a large eater and constitutionally opposed to depriving herself of the good things the table affords. In sheer desperation the *Kammerfrau*

turned at last to the news portion, and almost the first item of interest she saw was the story of how *Fraulein* — lost fifty pounds under the kneading fists of a skilful *masseuse*.

I thought I observed a ring of triumph in Adele von Haake's voice as she made the announcement to Her Majesty: The Kaiserin's most intense wish, at that particular time, was near consummation, and she (Haake) would introduce her into the state of new bliss. Could there be anything more pleasing and inspiring to the mind of a courtier? The Brockdorff and Countess Keller both turned green with envy when I explained to them why *Frau* von Haake held her head so high, and I myself own to have felt a little nettled at her success.

On the morning after the gentlewoman's discovery, Madame Scheibner arrived at the palace in a demi-carriage graciously provided for her convenience and sent to Wildpark station to meet her. How we have grown overnight, *Frau* Massage-artist, to be sure! Yesterday the meek servant of merchants' wives, with a play-actress thrown in here and there to provide spice for the nondescript small talk one has to carry on while scattering Madame Mueller's or *Frau* Schultze's *embonpoint*, and to-day the attendant of an imperial and royal majesty of which there are only four in the wide, wide world. The fat porter, who saw *Frau* Scheibner alight at the palace, and saw to it, too, that she used the servants' entrance instead of the great portals for which she was making in the full bloom of her haughty spirits, said afterward: "Never came across a more puffed-up hen in all my life! Why, she actually wore black stockings, the wench, like a real lady." It should be mentioned here, in parenthesis, that the white knitted article continues to form the holiday attire for the nether limbs of German women of the lower and middle classes up to this day, as

one is frequently forced to observe in all parts of the Fatherland.

Well, the *masseuse* came, saw, talked, and conquered; and those who have but occasion to look at her imperial victim, and know nothing of the Empress's personal history during the past two or three years, will certainly give Scheibner credit for being a flesh-reducer *par excellence*, for Auguste Victoria is now slenderness personified, and, lo! her chief point of attractiveness when in Court dress—the round outlines of her pear-shaped breasts—are sadly missed. To quote once more from the biblical chapter the old Empress was fond of referring to: "There is no remembrance of former things," or none to speak of.

But Scheibner must not be blamed for the whole extent of the damage that a hundred and fifty years ago might have sent her to the rack, and in Good Queen Bess's time would certainly have precipitated the lady into a vessel filled with boiling oil, there to remain until she was well done and no bone ached her; the Empress's reckless use of patent medicines and drugs, and her passion for indulging in violent exercise when in an interesting condition, must be held equally responsible with excessive massaging. There is probably not a brand of cosmetics, or similar application intended to beautify and improve the complexion or forestall and arrest adiposity, or any concoction whatever claiming this or that or a hundred things in the line of averting blemishes or amending one's good points, which the Empress has not employed at one time or another, either externally or internally. The cupboards in the bathroom in Potsdam as well as in Berlin are veritable museums of curiously-shaped and highly-labelled bottles and pots and retorts, bearing the names of chemists the world over. Some are half filled, others remain unopened, and all were procured at more or less heavy expense in money and time



wasted, for the Kaiser and Court-marshal must, of course, know nothing of these carryings on, and not unfrequently strangers are pressed into service to procure the latest cosmetical novelties *en vogue* among Parisiennes or the inmates of Turkish harems.

The most beautiful piece of furniture in Her Majesty's dressing-room is the wash-stand,—a great marble slab of perfect black, resting on solid silver legs, the *chefs-d'œuvre* of some London silversmiths. Above is a mirror, with a richly-ornamented, broad silver frame, set in the wall. There are the ordinary number of toilet utensils, hand-painted and of original design, but, though large-sized, they take up hardly one-third of the room on the big table, which groans under the weight of innumerable bottles and platters, filled with toilet-waters, medicines, and a thousand and one things,—jugs of milk and a plateful of cucumbers, bran-water at the side of Ambrée *crème*, fat-powders and others, vaseline, *eaux* of a hundred denominations, vinegars of all brands, rose-waters, "electricity drops," opium, and what not.

Once the Emperor strayed into the room, and, seeing and smelling this exhibition, remarked: "I did not know the *Schloss Apotheke* had moved up here. And what is that?" he added, pointing to the cucumber plate; "are you making yourself a salad between times? I see you have plenty of vinegars and oils around."

When His Majesty had gone, the Empress turned to Frau Gleim: "I am glad the Kaiser did not discover our little bottle. Give me a few drops on a piece of sugar; I feel quite faint after the ordeal. If he had seen the arsenic phial, there would have been such a row!"

Arsenic my mistress takes to insure a fresh and buoyant appearance; magnesia is supposed to whiten her nose and face when flushed by excessive lacing and tight shoes; but while these drugs, in conjunction with all the other messes,

had a share in undermining Her Majesty's robust condition and in destroying the clearness of her complexion, the injudicious internal use of iodine is probably responsible for the sovereign lady's premature wrinkles, her reduced bosoms, and her gray hair.

Auguste Victoria commenced the practice in 1894, taking at first one-sixteenth, afterward one-fourth of a grain of iodine daily, by whose advice I do not know. Her body-physician or any of the Court physicians had certainly nothing to do with it. This irritant poison worked with slow energy, but its flesh-devouring propensities were far from alarming Auguste Victoria, who welcomed the symptom as one bringing her nearer the husband's *beau idéal* of womanly perfection. "She would eat belladonna," I once heard Countess Keller, the lady-in-waiting, say, "if, by doing so, she could secure the Kaiser's company but for a single additional night in the year."

In a previous paragraph I mentioned Her Majesty's passion for indulging in violent exercise while in an interesting condition. The reader may say, in return: "How can she help it when she is always having children?" But a reference to statistics corrects this queer notion, which is only too popular in the Kaiserin's own estimation, for she positively detests to be thought *enceinte*; and if she must own to it in her own household, all servants are solemnly warned not to mention the fact on pain of instant dismissal. But to return to those infant statistics: Married at twenty-three, on the last of February, 1881, her first son, Friedrich Wilhelm, was born May 6, 1882; Eitel Fritz saw the light in July, 1883, and Adalbert arrived in July, 1884; on January 29, 1887, Prince Augustus was born, and on July 27, 1888, Prince Oscar,—five in seven years,—a good showing, but not an extraordinary one. Assuredly, there have been more pronounced cases of

*mater*-mania, especially in Germany; why, then,—the Kaiserin asks this question of her ladies many times in the course of a year,—why, then, make so much fuss about it? Why these ever-recurring newspaper allusions to her fecundity? But there is no rest for royal personages who overdo things in one respect or another, and so it happened that, in the beginning of June, 1890, a London daily, having good official connections, published an article intimating the probability of a further addition to “the Kaiser’s tribe of babies before the year was up.” Of course, the information was telegraphed to Berlin while still hot, and the pious *Reichsbote* took occasion to comment on it, choosing for a text Genesis vi, 1: “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them ——”

The *Reichsbote*,—this in the very sheet that the Kaiserin has stamped with highest approval, the only one she subscribes for! An official denial was out of the question; what, then, could be done to hoodwink the public and arrest further remarks upon the distasteful subject? A council of war, consisting of the indispensable Haake, Countesses Keller and Brockdorff, *Fräulein* von Gersdorff, and myself, was at once assembled to sit on the case, and, after profound deliberation, it was agreed that, first, Her Majesty must engage in some enterprise sufficiently daring to refute the published account; secondly, that the official gazette must be ordered to comment on her doings, and, thirdly, that this latter circumstance in itself involved a conclusive denial of the original report.

Our verdict, even though it might have been construed into something akin to high treason by a little stretch of the imagination, suited the Empress admirably. Here was her opportunity for silencing organized loyal impertinence and for becoming a sort of heroine at the same time.

*Herr Lück* was despatched to *Oberhofmeister* von Mirbach with the request to furnish Her Majesty with a copy of the Kaiser's daily calendar for June, and, on examining it, Auguste Victoria was not long finding the looked-for chance: toward the end of the month the war-lord had engaged to go to Pasewalk, to inspect the Cuirassier regiment garrisoned there, "*her* Cuirassiers," as, some months before, the Kaiser had made his wife "propriess" of the Pasewalkers. Ah, she would ask leave to parade her regiment before him on the occasion of his visit to the old town! "Willie"—this is the Empress's pet name for her lord and master—would not be "Willie" if he objected to a spectacle of that kind! The uniform that goes with every imperial decree naming honorary officers was pulled from the camphor-box in a jiffy, and was found to be a perfect fit, except that the waist might be tighter, considering that Her Majesty had received from Paris a new set of corsets, styled "death-grip" by the wardrobe-women. So it was taken in at the seams, an inch in some places and half an inch in others. And the child she was carrying under her heart? What mattered that! Did not "Willie," when she first appeared before him in troopers' garb and fully panoplied, exclaim, admiringly: "I see no milliner does fit my wife with gloves," adding, with a sarcastic smile, apparent to me, but not to Her Majesty, it seemed: "It's Shakespeare paraphrased, you know."

Well, "Dona" had her triumph. Seated on the strong-limbed parade-horse, wofully cramped for breath, and her face purple, she rode for an hour or longer at the head of the heavy troopers in their glittering helmets and breast-plates, going through all the evolutions—march, canter, *pesade*, and gallop—as her true steed, ever alert to the bugle-call, willed it. After the exercise, there was a big banquet in honor of the imperial guests, and the Empress

sat in the centre of the tables, placed horseshoe fashion, eating and drinking with accustomed appetite, "death-grip" holding her torso in its vise more than half the day!

On December 17 of the same year her child (Prince Joachim) was born, one of the puniest bits of humanity that ever outlived the period of teething. Like George the Second's oldest Prince—the same who subsequently turned crazy for several considerable periods of his long reign—the boy "was scarce made up, his mother not having gone her full time." The Empress had been taken in labor prematurely on receipt of news that the Kaiser's sister, Crown Princess Sophie of Greece, was about to embrace her husband's faith,—an event that did not actually take place until May 2 in the following year. For the time being nothing definite was settled concerning the Duchess's change of religious sentiment; but the mere project of apostasy in connection with a Prussian Princess sufficed to throw the Empress, who is Lutheran to the verge of fanaticism, into a violent passion, and in the midst of her excitement the child was born, a frail little thing, entirely unlike the rest of the imperial progeny.

When the Kaiser saw the poor wee baby, the chagrin of that proud man was awful to contemplate, and the gentlemen of his suite were at a loss to know whether it would be safe to compliment him upon the increase in his family or omit the formality on this inauspicious occasion. For myself I dispensed with it after seeing the look William gave one of the Court physicians, who had stuttered forth fustian congratulations. His Majesty remained only long enough in the chamber of the *accouchée* to frighten us all; on withdrawing, he ordered the doctors to his study, where, in peremptory language, he demanded them to account for the diminutiveness of the latest Hohenzollern.

The consensus of medical opinion blamed the circumstance of the birth already alluded to, but Dr. Leuthold, chief surgeon of the army, had enough bluntness in him to go to one of the book-cases and draw from it a volume of the "*Konversations Lexikon*," containing a dissertation on the injurious effect of tight-lacing during the period of pregnancy.

"The bad news from Athens," he said, "has only precipitated things; those infernal corsets Her Majesty used to wear are principally responsible for the condition of her child."

That settled the French "death-grip" manufacturer for a time, but it also kept Dr. Leuthold out of the enjoyment of the coveted appellation "von" for seven years longer. He was ennobled only in the beginning of 1897, while in the ordinary course of office-holding in His Majesty's immediate *entourage* the distinction should have been conferred upon him much earlier. Let me recall, in this connection, the case of the Stolbergs. The family of the late Grand Chamberlain, Count Otto von Stolberg-Wernigerode, had been awaiting recognition of the title of Prince, conferred upon it by decree of the "Holy Roman Emperor" that was, fully one hundred and forty-six years when William II succeeded to the crown, but within sixteen months afterward, the elevation or re-elevation of these feudal lords to the princely dignity was gazetted.

I shall never forget our trials and tribulations the first nine months after Joachim's birth, if I live a hundred years, nor will the other officials of the palace and the servants, high and low, who attended either of their Majesties during that period. Frederick II called his father's Court "a hell and dungeon," and William II seemed eager to make his as nearly similar to the old-time

standard as possible. All of us were sweltering in a sea of perturbation with that baby constantly on the brink of dissolution: the mother anxious, fearful of the husband she vainly tried to please; the father dejected, provoked almost beyond endurance, and above all disappointed. He, the parent of a weakling, of a child upon whose brow scrofula had set its damning mark! All those stories of hereditary disease and degeneration would be revived in the public prints. There would probably be references to his dwarfed arm and his running ear. "And to think that 'Dona' brought it upon him and upon herself by the confounded vanity he had pampered and encouraged in every way possible. As for his sister Sophie, he would be revenged on her and on all these beggarly Greeks!"

These are only extracts from William's ravings overheard by his adjutants and other attendants in those days. The threatening references concerning the Duchess of Sparta I witnessed myself time and again.

The Empress, on her part, eager to make up as far as possible for her previous thoughtlessness, nursed little Joachim at her breast for a longer period than she had done in the case of any of his brothers (these were either weaned or given over to the tender care of a wet-nurse after three months); but this very circumstance, much as it did toward improving the little one's general health, was destined to become the cause of a distemper that in all probability will worry him as long as he lives.

The baby Prince was getting on nicely, when the Empress, while nursing him one morning, received a despatch from her sister, Princess Frederick Leopold of Prussia, who was just then *enceinte*, saying that her husband had abandoned her in the course of their Italian tour,—leaving her with a solitary *Hofdame*, a young and inexperienced one at that,—while he was speeding toward parts unknown in

the society of a notorious dancer. Here mention should be made of the fact that Auguste Victoria and her sister were great friends at that time; besides, Her Majesty holds extremely strong views upon the subject of domestic fidelity; no wonder the news gave her a shock. White with rage, her first impulse was to inform the Kaiser; if he heard of it indirectly, he might be moved to think the Princess was at fault in this domestic drama, for Sophie Louise has many enemies in the palace. Pressing the sucking baby closer to her bosom, the Empress burst into His Majesty's room. Ah, Frederick Leopold had anticipated her; explanatory letters and telegrams upon the Kaiser's table told *his* side of the row! "Your sister's vanity and jealousy have brought on this scandal. Read!" cried the Emperor. "It runs in the family, I presume. Günther" (the Duke of Schleswig, brother of Auguste Victoria) "is likewise in trouble, ruining himself for that infamous bag-o'-bones, Otero."

Nothing more was heard of the conversation between the imperial couple, except that the Empress begged her husband "to speak quietly," but a few minutes later the Kaiser himself came running from the room and alarmed the whole castle by the report that Prince Joachim was in convulsions.

Poor little fellow! fear and anger, acting upon the mother, poisoned her milk and him. I can see him to-day, as then, his disproportionately big head and face purple, the globes of the eyes turned upward, fingers clenched in the palms, and the body and limbs in violent spasmodic contractions. The Empress, in her fear that the baby would choke, had torn off every particle of his clothing and stood by, helpless and horrified beyond measure. At last, Mrs. Matcham, the English nurse, came running in, followed by the physician on duty. "It's



epilepsy; I feared as much!" she cried, fortunately in her native tongue. Then carrying the child to a corner of the room where an electric fan was stationed, she said to the doctor: "Won't you please ask their Majesties and these people here to withdraw, every one of them? It is impossible to bring the young 'un around while the air is obstructed."

This, Prince Joachim's first fit,—the first, at least, that assumed alarming proportions,—lasted nearly forty minutes, an eternity for all who had seen the child. The worst over, it was, however, given out that our fears had been exaggerated. There had been "no fits or spasms," our ocular observations notwithstanding;—"just a little stomach trouble," that was all. What liars these body-physicians are, though, to be sure, abdominal-epilepsy—as such the case was finally diagnosed—is a "stomach trouble" in the same way as insanity may be put down as an affection of the head. "The disease," continued the medical judges, "was caused by malformation of the skull, some parts of which appear uncommonly thick." Here the written report broke off. It would have been *à se majesté* to even allude, black on white, to Dr. Leuthold's findings as to the fashionable agency responsible for bringing into the world afflicted children such as Joachim.

The Prince remained in a precarious condition for a year or longer. During that time he was really never out of danger, and his head-nurse, assisted by Dr. Zunker, often complained that the anxiety was killing her, especially when Her Majesty was away and the entire responsibility rested with her. While the Empress was in Felixstowe, little Joachim hovered between life and death continually. Dr. Zunker dared not leave the palace, and a carriage and pair was kept in readiness at the Stadt Schloss, night after night, to bring other physicians from the city at a

moment's notice. The telegraph operators, too, were kept on duty overnight, so that the mother might be notified, if necessary.

When, at last, Her Majesty returned, *Fräulein Stahl*, the same who is mentioned in another part of this book, was engaged to take care of the Prince at night-time, and this wise old woman succeeded admirably in comforting the little one and securing for him the rest he stood so much in need of. Once the Empress entered the baby's room late in the afternoon, and observing that the child had not yet been bathed, said, disapprovingly: "Why, *Fräulein Stahl*, it's nearly three o'clock and the Prince is still in his night-gown."

The old woman raised her eyes, but not in a timid manner. "Majesty," she replied, in her abrupt style, "the child has not slept all night; Majesty should thank God that he is sleeping now. A servant wench would probably wake him up to put on his clean bib and tucker; his *nurse* refuses to do so."

Some time later a curious experiment was tried. *Fräulein von Gersdorff* brought a bull-finch, one warranted not to sing, into the baby's room, begging the Empress to let the bird remain.

"But the Kaiser won't like it; I dare not permit it," said Her Majesty.

"Then Your Majesty must hide the bird. It is absolutely necessary that he should be somewhere about the Prince's person."

The *Hofdame* went on to say that, according to an old legend current at her home, a bull-finch when brought into direct contact with an epileptic draws the malady upon himself, while gradually freeing the afflicted person of the curse. Auguste Victoria thereupon permitted the bird to remain, and while Prince Joachim's general health did not

improve at first, the intervals between the spasms became somewhat longer. After three weeks the bird died in convulsions. Another was purchased, and that one, too, succumbed under like symptoms. Nowadays, Joachim is never without a sympathetic bull-finch, a few of the species being always kept on hand, as the birds seldom survive a single month after being placed in the Prince's room. As for His Royal Highness, he is not yet free from the awful curse, but the evil seems to have lessened its hold upon him. What was *grand mal* once is now *petit mal*, as the French say.

I forgot to state that the Empress, after Joachim's first attack, continued to suckle the baby, though the physicians had ordered him weaned, the great authority on children's diseases, Professor Hensch, from Berlin, having diagnosed Her Majesty's milk as positively poisonous to the little one. However, Her Majesty considered it her sacred duty to nurse the child, and weaned him only when the Kaiser, urged on by his sisters and other friends, commanded her to desist.

## CHAPTER IV

The Empress sometimes attends luncheon in grand toilet and *décolleté*, a habit English women pronounce shocking and that Americans regard as ridiculous in the extreme. It is, however, nothing of the kind in Germany, where evening-dress is quite the proper thing, if not the obligatory one, on all occasions of ceremony or social intercourse of a higher order. The candidate for office booked for audience with a Minister of State at 9 A.M.—they are all early risers in the Fatherland—will come down to breakfast in swallow-tail and white tie, and afterward strut his way to the palace without an overcoat, or wear that garment wide open, if wintry breezes compel him to cast this sort of shadow over his festive raiment. If a gentleman of birth and position is forced to appear in Court even in the character of a defendant, he goes fully panoplied as he would to an evening party with a lady upon his arm. The infamous Chancellor Leist, who as acting Governor of German East Africa drove the natives to rebellion by his atrocities, and was recalled and prosecuted, went to his trial before the Potsdam tribunal in regulation ball costume, white kid gloves and all, the lapel of his coat strewn with decorations and topped off by a gay *boutonnière*. And, stranger still, the public prosecutor and the judges likewise wore evening-dress under their robes of office. Swallow-tail coats are in order for five-o'clock teas, as well as for mid-day weddings, in Germany, and the guests at

nuptial ceremonies often have opportunity to see as much of the bride's upper anatomy as did the attendants at George the Third's and Princess Charlotte Sophia's marriage, "when the purple and ermine cloak worn by Her Royal Highness, soon to be a Majesty, was so heavy as to drag down her waist and completely denude one-half of her body."

Her Majesty follows the general fashion of the country, and, it may be added, accedes to it the more readily, as she dearly loves to exhibit her shoulders. Luncheon in the Neues Palais and in the Berlin Schloss, moreover, is really the dinner of Germany, as it includes soup, that dish concerning which Heinrich Heine says "he could not imagine a world where the sun never shone and people never knew soup introducing the principal meal of the day." On the menu cards, luncheon figures as *Zweites Frühstück* (*déjeuner à la fourchette*), but that is merely a concession to the Kaiser's household Anglomania. The six-o'clock meal is styled *Mittagstafel* (dinner), yet, when taken *en famille*, includes only such courses as ordinarily are provided for a supper.

*Souper* is served at nine o'clock sharp,—whether their Majesties are at home, at the theatre, or at a reception is immaterial. It consists invariably of weak tea, cold meats, and salads, things that can be easily transported to places of amusement, if necessary. All the royal theatres are provided with "cold larders."

Altogether there are four principal meals at the Berlin Court, three of which are usually attended by guests and the highest officials of the household. The Kaiserin makes it a point to appear on all these occasions in different styles of dress. That would mean a change of costume four times daily, and as many hours spent in affairs of the toilet. How Schwerdtfeger and Gleim would rejoice if

these calculations were accurate! As a matter of fact, Auguste Victoria wears seven or eight different gowns every twenty-four hours, and tries on from ten to twelve to see which suit her best. If, for instance, a sea-green demi-toilet is ordered for the theatre, the wardrobe-women must arrange all dresses of that color and description on the numerous skeleton puppets that line the walls in Her Majesty's clothes-presses, each robe having its own set of accompaniments as to stockings, shoes, petticoats, wraps, and head-gear. About an hour and a half before the carriage starts, the Empress comes in to inspect her treasures and to decide what she will wear. But that does not end matters. Frequently, when her toilet is nearly finished, the august lady discovers that the shade chosen is not becoming to her on that particular day. "It makes me look old," or, "I am afraid this color will not do under the electric light,—what does Your Excellency think?" This to Countess Brockdorff, Grand-mistress.

Of course, that lady agrees with the implied opinion, and "Away with this confounded togger!" as Napoleon the Great said when divesting himself of his coronation robes. Another costume, with its numerous accessories, is brought from the mighty closets, and the process of robing is renewed, while probably two thousand people or more, having paid speculators' prices for the honor of sitting under the same roof with the imperial couple, are loyally wondering why the overture is delayed.

The Kaiserin seldom wears the same dress twice unless it has previously undergone a radical change in her own workshop, where she keeps from four to six dress-makers busy all the year round. Three Vienna *robes de chambre*, of which more anon, are the only exceptions to this rule, that, by the way, is of her own making. On an average, Her Majesty uses up, or at least buys, from two hundred to

two hundred and twenty-five costumes in the course of a year, some costing as little as one hundred dollars. The bills for others, by their size, give her Chief of Cabinet, Baron von Mirbach, palpitations. It was, I believe, in 1890 when some wicked sheets first commenced the ribald talk about the Kaiserin's debts at dry-goods and millinery stores. The clerks and book-keepers of several great firms in the capital had come together for a quiet confab and compared notes. "*Donnerwetter!*—and thou, also, Brutus?" They did a little figuring, and the figures got into the papers, and both their Majesties stormed and raged and made divers promises to each other. The Kaiserin, on her part, vowed to punish the metropolitan shop-keepers for their indiscretion, by taking away her patronage altogether. Of course, unforeseen events, caprice, and sudden requirements, dictated by royal visits or a round of festivities, compelled Auguste Victoria time and again, during the last five or six years, to disregard her pledge, but it is true, nevertheless, that the majority of Berlin dealers sporting the legend "Purveyor to Her Majesty, the Empress and Queen," on giant signs highly embellished with crowns and eagles, have little purveying to do for the palace ever since complaints of tardy payment on the part of a certain imperial customer crept into print. Nowadays the greater number of grand toilets, so styled, are furnished by Marriscou, in Vienna; riding and hunting habits come from Frankfurt-on-the-Main, and a Düsseldorf tailor keeps the Kaiserin's ever-yawning clothes-presses supplied with woollens, for the theory, still *en vogue* in some of the smaller German courts, that royalty durst not wear anything save silk, has long been exploded with us.

Aside from these regular purveyors, the Paris firm Petrus, having a branch Unter den Linden, succeeds three or four times per annum in selling some exquisite pieces of finery

in the palace, and similar good luck, even in a more pronounced degree, attends the persistent efforts of a fashionable Berlin dress-maker, Madame Philip, a rotund old party, who, appreciating Her Majesty's aversion to meet any of the serving classes, never allows an employee of hers to go within a mile of the royal residence, transacting all business in person, or with the assistance of her daughter. She runs errands, alters, remakes, improves, and suggests, as whim or occasion requires, and upon her bowed head all-highest displeasure descends at regular intervals; but it's all business, and, I take it, duly registered in the account-books. For my own part, I would prefer the assistance of a tidy clerk or saleswoman to that of the fussy madame who is always half beside herself with loyal pride on the one hand and mean submissiveness on the other.

Madame Philip's success, by the way, proves the truth of the old adage, that, by pandering to the weaknesses of the mighty, poor folks may "correct" their fortune.

It happens quite frequently that the great business houses of the capital ask permission to exhibit their latest offerings, or some special fabrics and designs, before Her Majesty; and as the Empress always wants new things, and must have the pick of all novelties, that boon is usually granted, the firms being requested to send their goods early in the morning. If the Court is established in Potsdam, the salespeople arrive with their boxes on the nine-o'clock train, and are at once shown to the wardrobe-rooms, while lackeys bring forth the necessary number of puppets and figure-heads to mount the dresses, wraps, capes, or *lingerie*. Thus the succession of lofty parlors is turned into a bazaar, an impression heightened by the fact that one of the distinguishing features of the great department stores, namely: "Prices marked in plain figures," is retained. True, this sort of thing does not strike one as



consistent with imperial dignity; but Baron von Mirbach, ever mindful of his precious budget, makes the tacking on of prices a *conditio sine qua non*, while the Empress, affecting not to see the saucy tickets, more often than not regulates her purchases in accordance with their tenor.

On bazaar days, as the clothes exhibitions are dubbed, the Kaiserin is apt to forego all customary occupations in her eagerness to see and acquire, if possible, the many beautiful things displayed. The children are surrendered to the tender care of tutors and governesses after a hasty "Good-morning," and the tour of inspection among the richly apparelled dummies begins shortly after breakfast, *Kammerfrau* von Hahnke, Countess Keller, and *Mademoiselle* von Gersdorff invariably accompanying Her Majesty, not because they are blessed with special good taste, but in view of the fact that they form a trio of unconditional assenters, willing to go to pieces before any hideous garment that the Empress, who has no ideas of her own, may fancy. I remember that, in the fall of 1891, Madame Sobersky, head of a well-known Berlin firm, brought, among numerous other wraps, a light carriage-cloak to the palace, a frog-green affair with plaited furbelows, a very monster of ugliness, but undoubtedly *recherché*, for it seemed well-nigh impossible that anything so unsightly should have been duplicated and sold. Countess Brockdorff and myself expressed ourselves to that effect pretty plainly, but the Empress, who never, by any chance, knows what suits her complexion, fell in love with the horrible thing at first sight, donned it, and, regarding herself in a mirror, asked the trio what they thought of her choice.

"Majesty looks as sweet as a picture," cried the Hahnke at once; Countess Keller said something to the same effect, and *Mademoiselle* von Gersdorff vowed she had never

encountered anything half so beautiful in her life, and she has seen a good many days, this maid of honor. So that paragon of ugliness was bought for five hundred marks, and the Empress wore it twice, the second time in the Kaiser's company, during a drive to the Thiergarten, when His Majesty proposed the following riddle: "Dona," he said, "why does your coat remind me so vividly of my trips to Norway?"

The Kaiserin gave it up, and "Willie" volunteered the abominable solution: "Because it is the color of *mal de mer*."

But it is not always that the Kaiserin determines to buy in a hurry. The inspection frequently occupies the better part of the day, with intervals for meals and drives, and is continued in the evening before retiring. To try on a dozen costumes, twice as many waists, and half a wagon-load of wraps and mantles, such an exhaustive task has no terrors for Auguste Victoria. On the contrary, she delights in it, and is never in better humor than when so occupied; whether she has the inclination or the money to buy is immaterial. Hers is clearly a case of bargain-counter mania, with the disagreeable features concerning the "help" emphasized.

Poor saleswomen, clerks, and carriers, driven from their hard couches in one of the detestable Berlin *pensions* (boarding-houses), or perchance an equally poor home, they hasten to the royal residence at an unearthly hour, arrayed in their best, after a hurried and insufficient breakfast. Arrived at the palace, they must set to work exhibiting their treasures, and then retire to the hall, or, if one be particularly lucky, to the antechamber. That means wait, wait, wait. The great lady whom they are to serve is supposed to know nothing of the discomforts of others, and the liveried officials and menials swarming in the

corridors and yawning in all corners care even less than their august mistress. The porters and salesmen may go to the canteen, a sort of military mess-room, established for the benefit of coachmen and grooms in a wing of the stable buildings, where refreshments are sold at a little over cost price; but what are the women to do, seeing that no person, high or low, can obtain so much as a cup of tea in the Kaiser's palace without special orders from the grand-master, unless his or her name appears on the list of regular retainers? Besides, if they leave their post even for ever so short a while, there is a probability that they may not be on hand at the very moment when wanted. The Kaiserin may take it into her head to ask certain questions, and woe to the poor clerk that does not readily respond to the summons. A furious note will acquaint the firm of its employee's negligence and the "affront" given to Her Majesty, and off goes the guilty one's head.

I shall never forget the pathetic spectacle these poor saleswomen present,—ill-fed, weak, hopeful,—the wall-flowers of trade! Some had to remain until within a few minutes of the last train, then hurry off on foot with their order-book blank. Surely that was no fault of theirs; but would the head of the firm take so charitable a view? I know of more than one case where he did not, and where the Kaiserin's fitfulness caused persons to be dismissed.

However, there is frequently a reason other than caprice, or want of money, for Her Majesty's refusals. Schwerdtfeger and Gleim, being most accomplished needle-women and designers, need only hint that they can do as well as the store-keeper to be at once commanded to copy the submitted patterns for use in the household tailor-shop. Pilfering a trusting milliner's fashion ideas is not a dignified business for the German Empress to be in; but, as

*Herr* von der Knesebeck apologetically remarked, "Frederick William II buncoed the Jews by forcing them to purchase wild boar from the royal hunting-grounds, while at the same time they were forbidden to trade in the article, and were told to send the game to the hospitals if religious scruples prohibited consumption at home. And Frederick the Great," continued the learned chamberlain, "was a counterfeiter of money, which, moreover, he adorned with the likeness of Princes entirely innocent of such nefarious practices."

Such are courtly sophisms,—a queer mess of rascality and heartless philosophy. The proper way to "live down" one's ancestors, it would seem, is to imitate their vices and repeat their crimes *en miniature*. It has always been a wonder to me that these sharp performances have never been found out, or that, if discovered, they could always be hushed up. What "copy" they would make for the *Judenpresse* (the German liberal papers opposed to anti-Semitism), for the whole process of Jew-baiting, as carried on in the German-speaking countries, grounds upon the assumption that the chosen people are more apt to take undue advantage of others than the rest of mankind, Christians especially. And here we find the German Empress, high protectress of Lutheranism, a Princess who, above all, aspires to the title of "church-builder," in the business particularly and essentially branded as "Sheeny tricks." Can it be that the opposition in Germany is still imbued with those sentiments which, in 1848, led the revolting subjects of His Highness of Sachsen-Altenburg to proclaim the republic in the words: "The monarchical system has ceased to exist; the country is a republic, with our Duke as sovereign"?

The well-known French firm of M. Jules Bister, Unter den Linden, has been victimized for years by the imposition

described. Bister makes a specialty of sending new "creations" of *lingerie*, fancy petticoats, *négligés*, and hats to the Schloss and Neues Palais for inspection, and has often complained that the goods are returned crushed and showing signs of much handling, M. Bister probably blaming the ladies-in-waiting, or his own employees. If he could have seen Schwerdtfeger and Gleim go over his costly Paris models with a tape-measure, while myself or Countess Brockdorff jotted down the color and lace combinations, and the sort of lining and embroidery used, he would have played quite a different tune, I reckon.

Latterly the Kaiserin's want of decision causes Berlin shop-keepers to regard a royal command to send goods on approval in anything but a joyful spirit; and small wonder, for nine times out of ten their good offices, expense, and loss of time are thrown away. Thus, in June, 1892, to mention only one instance, the Empress ordered four or five metropolitan business houses, making a specialty of infants' ware and furniture, to despatch to the palace a variety of cradles and small brass bedsteads suitable for the child she expected. As may be imagined, the firms so honored fairly outdid themselves in the race to furnish the finest and latest on hand. Twelve hours after the royal command had been given out, a succession of furniture vans rolled into our court-yard, and a bazaar, filled with lovely creations in the *layette* line,—as the salespeople uniformly put it,—was soon established in one of the big halls. Among these treasures Her Majesty wandered for a week or ten days, selecting this or that one minute and rejecting it an hour later. The *embarras de richesse* bewildered her, and, though knowing full well that she had only five hundred marks to spend, the very costliest offerings, exceeding her modest stipend twice or even three times over, engaged her fancy to the exclusion of all others.

The shop-keepers who had denuded their warerooms and show-windows of *chefs-d'œuvre* to please the Empress, got tired after waiting a week, and remonstrated with the Court-marshal, petitioning for the return of their goods. That gentleman explained to Her Majesty that she must decide without further delay; but it was not until the Berliners had actually begun to remove their property, a fortnight after sending the things on approval, that Auguste Victoria chose among the remainder. On September 13 the little stranger arrived,—the Royal Princess Victoria-Louise of to-day.

But to return to those *robes de chambre* which Her Majesty likes so well as to exempt them from the rule that disqualifies articles of wearing apparel for use after having served their purpose once or twice. These *Schlaf-röcke* have a history, and remind me of a passage in William D. Howells's preface to the memoirs of Frederick the Great's "little sister" Wilhelmina, whom the American author styles "Princess Royal of Prussia," though she was only a royal Prussian Princess, Prussia being one of the strongholds of Salic law. Howells tells us that the poor Margravine's father, "though rich and powerful, was coarse and mean in most things, and bullied the Queen quite like a King in pantomime." Does he really suppose that the ignoble practice of browbeating a sovereign lady begins and ends with the first Frederick William and the king-popinjays of mimicry? Sympathizers of the monarchical system, who write of royal life under the direct influence of the august persons alleged to be portrayed, and *littérateurs* never permitted to invade the palace's sacred precincts,—a Louise Mühlbach and a certain American follower of hers, for instance,—may agree with Howells, and it is certainly pleasant to do so, but candor compels me to destroy that cheerful illusion

so far as it may apply to the Imperial Court of Berlin. "Willie" and "Dona" have their little unpleasantnesses and homely rows like any ordinary couple, and, what is quite self-evident in the Fatherland, the man always gets the better of his weaker half, the Kaiser's superior intellect, his impetuosity and unequivocal bluntness of speech, making his ascendancy a foregone conclusion. Besides, the Empress is deadly afraid of her lord, and readily capitulates whenever and wherever His Majesty signifies disapproval. And here the eternal sameness of royal and common folks is again emphasized,—most of the quarrels between the imperial couple are occasioned by questions of dress, or the difficulties of paying for the same. So it was with the Vienna dressing-gowns which seemed destined, at one time, to become the source of really serious trouble in our *ménage*. Auguste Victoria had ordered the precious robes during the excitement of her first visit as German Empress to the Austrian capital; flushed by unprecedented honors showered upon her by the Court, government, and city, she had fondly persuaded herself that there was no such thing as a limited budget, and had given orders to tradespeople in right royal style,—the style of the hapless Ludwig of Bavaria. She wanted the newest, the very finest, and the most expensive, and it must be admitted that the *Hoflieferant* proved himself equal to the occasion. Life in the Kaiserin's suite was never pleasanter than during the week that followed the arrival of those masterpieces from Wien. The Kaiserin held regular *levées*, a thing she had never before attempted, so anxious was she to exhibit her treasures to the ladies and gentlemen of the Court, and her friends generally. On these occasions she used to wear the least costly of the imported gowns, which was of sea-green cloth, fashioned in Watteau style, and having a velvet train three yards long;

the entire front and the hem of the train were embroidered in real gold, each flower-leaf being valued at twenty-five florins.

Of the other robes, arranged on dummies, one was of bright pink damask with a white velvet front, silver threaded and edged all around with ostrich feathers of the most perfect white; but the third was easily the *pièce de résistance*, being of red velvet and of a shade especially manufactured for the purpose; the ingredients of the dye were a secret, reserved for Her Majesty's exclusive use. This gown was cut extremely *décolleté*, the sleeves were short, and there was a profusion of lace—white, black, and red—on the train and around the neck and arms. Surely, no woman could be blamed for glorying in such exquisite robes, but possession, like rank, carries with it certain responsibilities. On October 1, 1890,—quarter-day, if you please,—Grand-master von Mirbach received the Vienna tailor's and milliner's bill with its four noughts, and florins at that! "The poor Baron," says an eye-witness, "was nearly knocked silly when he read the figures. '*Woher nehmen und nicht stehlen?*'" ("How can I pay this without resorting to thievery?") "he cried, after partly recovering his composure; 'our treasury is as empty as a cornet's who spends his allowance in advance; I hardly know how to pay Her Majesty's laundry bills for the ensuing three months.'

"Kammerherr von der Knesebeck spoke up at this juncture. 'The Kaiser,' he said, 'remarked this morning that he was quite unable to decide on a birthday present for Her Majesty. Why not propose that he assume payment of this bill? It will save His Majesty the trouble of choosing among a hundred and one offerings by the different purveyors and right Your Excellency's budget, which is, after all, the main thing.'"



Of course, *Herr* von Mirbach jumped at this chance, and the ball was set rolling after the old-approved style, viz.: the entire palace *camarilla* combined to persuade the Emperor "that it was his all-gracious will and command to present the Kaiserin, on the occasion of her birthday, with three certain *robes de chambre*," the price of which exceeded his Chancellor's annual salary.

Many readers will think Kaiser William too proud and self-assertive a personage to be wheedled. Let those doubters consider the Court recipe for such acts of gentle inveiglement and own themselves sold. It runs somewhat after the fashion of Genesis, chapter iv, verse 18: "And Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech," etc. *Herr* von der Knesebeck told Baron Mirbach, Baron Mirbach told the Kaiser's Court-marshal, the Court-marshal told the Master of Ceremonies, the Master of Ceremonies told the Royal House-marshal, the Royal House-marshal told the Vice Grand-master of Ceremonies, the Vice Grand-master of Ceremonies told the Seneschal, the Seneschal told the Chief of Cabinet, the Chief of Cabinet told the Chief of the *Maison Militaire*, the Chief of the *Maison Militaire* told the Imperial Adjutants, and the whole set dinned it into the all-highest ears until the Emperor thought it his own "most gracious" idea, and consequently little short of divine inspiration. The three dressing-gowns were yanked into the royal presence—one literally came off the Kaiserin's back—and found immediate favor with William, who was just then contemplating his order of Cabinet, creating the half-rococo, half-savage Prussian Court-dress, a state paper, be it remembered, in which the word "pants" occurs twelve times. His Majesty ordered the bill paid without looking at it, and Auguste Victoria and her Court-marshal breathed easy once more.

Perhaps it is the thought of her Vienna triumphs which makes the robes so dear to Auguste Victoria that she cannot find it in her heart to cast them off like the rest of her things. They are styled "the perennial" by her women, who naturally try their best to disgust the Kaiserin with her clothes so they may the quicker be turned over to them and the second-hand dealer. All house-dresses pass to the minor mistresses of the robes after merely nominal use, while the grand and demi toilets go by right to the ladies-in-waiting and highest lady officials of the palace. That at the Berlin Court the majority of valuable costumes is otherwise disposed of is the special misfortune of the Countesses von Brockdorff and von Keller and *Mademoiselle* von Gersdorff, and is a subject to which I will presently return. Those Vienna dressing-gowns are still in Her Majesty's possession, and occasionally see the light of day, though the Kaiserin now refrains from wearing either of the trio at family parties and semi-social events, as she was in the habit of doing a couple of years ago. I remember a family supper held at the Berlin Schloss in the beginning of March, 1891, for which the Empress issued autograph invitations marked at the bottom: "*Im Hauskleide*" ("Come in your wrapper"). Only two ladies and one man were bidden, the Princess Frederick Leopold, the Hereditary Princess of Meiningen, and Duke Günther of Schleswig, the sister, sister-in-law, and brother of the Kaiserin.

The real object of the invitation, namely, a wish to dazzle the other women with her red velvet *robe de chambre*, Her Majesty had confided to the royal Duke, and His Highness had considered it a good joke to blab. The Princesses Charlotte's and Louise Sophie's first thought was, of course, to fight fire by fire, but when a tour of the great Berlin establishments yielded nothing in the line of

dressing-gowns that could be considered a trump to Her Majesty's acquisitions, the ladies determined to get the better of their imperial relative in a less dignified manner. When, at nine o'clock sharp, the Kaiserin entered her writing-cabinet where the repast was to be served (the dining-room is too extensive an apartment for the *petit cercle*), she was met by her sisters, who, contrary to etiquette, still wore their carriage-wraps and hats.

"We have followed your command to the letter," spoke up the Hereditary Princess, being the bolder of the two, "but did not care to expose ourselves *en déshabillé* before the domestics. With your permission, we will keep on our cloaks until supper is served and we are *entre nous*."

Her Majesty, on whom Charlotte's subtle sarcasm was entirely lost, looked puzzled at first, but when her eyes lit upon the smiling face of Duke Günther, it occurred to her that she had been sold. However, she was not to betray any vexation, for that would give "the Meiningen" opportunity for renewed onslaughts. "Very well," she said, "we can have the *service de confiance*," and Countess Brockdorff communicated an order to that effect to the House-marshal.

The *service de confiance*, adopted for the present uses of the Court, is not the one made famous by Frederick the Great's suppers with the dancer Barbarina, but a very large silver platter for the centre of the table, so constructed as to permit each diner to serve himself or herself without the slightest inconvenience out of a compartment of the dish, each compartment holding the entire contents of a course, and a ladle and fork pointing toward each cover.

Once the platter is set upon the table and the crystal wine carafes distributed, the *Kammerjäger*s may be sent away and never missed. This was done, even to Her Majesty's body-chasseur, and while Duke Günther filled the tulip-shaped

bumpers, bearing the Great Frederick's monogram in gold, the Princesses threw off their wraps.

Was ever a supper-party more conspicuous for dress and undress than the women in the picture now disclosed? The Empress in her magnificent red gown, her neck and breast and arms covered with jewels, those great pearls and brilliants she inherited from the first Kaiserin. Behold, as an offset to this uncalled-for splendor, Madame Charlotte in a bedraggled satin petticoat, considerably frayed at the bottom, and sporting a loose waist of doubtful white with several buttons missing and laces torn and battered. Her Royal Highness wore no corsets, and had her hair in curl-papers for the most part. The Princess Frederick Leopold looked a shade less slatternly than her sharp-witted sister-in-law, but the wrapper she had on was neither in good taste nor particularly clean, being of the pink and light-blue variety that second-hand actresses affect in boudoir scenes on and off the stage.

Auguste Victoria was speechless with rage. "Lottchen" had evidently set out to insult her, and to make the outrage the more painful had inveigled Princess Louise Sophie to join in her scheme of masquerading. Yet so cleverly had she mixed her cards, and the *quid pro quo* had been carried to such a successful issue, that to quarrel with her meant to invite ridicule from the whole Court, not even excepting the Emperor. The only safe course for Her Majesty to pursue under the circumstances was to completely ignore their Highnesses' motives and treat the impertinent mummary as a huge joke. That conviction flashed across Her Majesty's mind; and decided her immediate demeanor. "I suppose my invitation was stupidly worded," said the Kaiserin, as soon as she had recovered from the shock, "but I assure you, *mesdames*, although no man save Günther was asked, and although carnival is near

at hand, I had no intention of asking you to sup with me in rags. Why, Charlotte, does the Prince permit you to go about the house in this fashion?"

The Kaiser's eldest sister laughed. "As His Highness takes such good care not to pay for my toilets, it would ill become him to quarrel about anything I choose to wear," she said, mockingly, continuing in the same vein: "let us hope that His Majesty will not take it into his head to disturb our party."

This fear was fortunately not realized, fortunately for the Empress! "Willie," you must know, has a keen sense of the ludicrous, and the Princesses certainly had his wife at a disadvantage. Neither did the incidents of the supper, that was so fateful to the Kaiserin's pride, become public among the retinue, thanks to extraordinary precautions. For my part, I gathered the details from the vivid description jovial Duke Günther rendered at a recent *soirée* in his castle Primkenau.

## CHAPTER V

The winter's round of festivities usually leaves the Empress's exchequer in more than the ordinary state of exhaustion, and Her Majesty's noble resolve never to don a gown more than twice would certainly have to be amended in the summer months by some such proviso as "state of finances permitting," if it was not for the Grand Turk.

Ay, the Lord Sultan of Believers, Padishah and Grand Seignior, the same gentleman who makes a specialty of leading the Powers by the nose and who occasionally arranges a bit of St. Bartholomew Night for "Christian dogs" in the cold glare of day! The Prussian Majesties are Abdul-Hamid's devoted friends ever since their joint visit of state to Constantinople in 1890, and the Sultan would not be the shrewd diplomat and political equilibrist he undoubtedly is if he did not appreciate these sentiments at their full value, for if it be true that the Powers' jealousies are responsible for the perpetuation of the unspeakable Turk in Europe, it must likewise be owned that William the Second's friendly attitude toward the High Porte, during 1896 and 1897 especially, did much to disconcert the European concert, and still continues in the same line.

There has been talk that the Kaiser was well paid for his good offices. Five million francs were said to have come from the Tscheragan Serai, mirrored in the Bosphorus, to the Schloss, overshadowing an arm of the Spree, and

our Court-marshals, hoping to profit by this sudden wind-fall, were in a very happy mood in consequence; but if this amount really changed hands from Sultan to Kaiser, it was presumably used to pay off some pressing debts to Krupp, Baron Stumm, and others. The prevailing penury at Court was certainly not relieved, and the customary offerings of the Padishah arrived as in former years, only a little more promptly. Abdul sent William long-maned ponies from Barbary, and our lord repaid his autocratic colleague with some of the choice product of Trakehnen. As usual, precious porcelains, turned out by the Royal Berlin works, had found their way by New Year into the splendid harem on the bosom of the Sweet Waters, and the fat sultanas and kadyns returned the compliment by selecting for the Frankish Empress the very choicest of Oriental cloth, linens, gauzes, and lace garments for wear during the heated term. These presents to Her Majesty arrive regularly in April, or the beginning of May, each year, and there being whole bales of the various textures and shades, Auguste Victoria is a very happy woman in consequence. She can have new dresses by the dozen now, and no bills to be dreaded, for Schwerdtfeger and Gleim are well able to have demi-toilets and house-gowns properly made in the home tailoring-shop, both being students of the most advanced fashions.

The number of seamstresses in this establishment is always largely increased in the spring, and I have seen as many as forty wielders of needle and thread working under Frau von Haake's nominal direction after the Sultan's presents arrived. All heads of department in the palace, it should be remembered, must be noble-born, and while the lady of the bed-chamber knows no more how to fit a waist or "hang" a skirt than I do of such things, or of the mountains and canals on Mars for that

matter, she is excellently well qualified to find fault with low-born menials that do understand them.

Whenever I see the poor wardrobe-women and tailor-esses driven and abused, I cannot help admiring these persons, who not only suffer from imperial quarrelsomeness, but, in addition, have to put up with the spiteful tongue of a powerful intermediary. Still, such is the attraction of a Court, that of its lower officials and servants none resign, while very few lay themselves open to dismissal. Various perquisites, the promise of a pension, and last, but not least, an occasional smile from the royal master or mistress, easily offset the disagreeable and distressing features of life within the Crown's shadow. I have seen Schwerdtfeger positively nettled but two or three times in all the years I observed her daily intercourse with the Empress and Her Majesty's ladies,—once when she had successfully finished a velvet state costume without previously trying it on, and the Kaiserin, instead of saying a few pleasantries, dismissed the poor girl with the words: "*Es hätte besser sein können*" ("It would admit of improvements"). It was a cruel thing to do, considering that the dress, a very pretentious lavender affair costing twenty-five marks per yard, was of perfect fit and workmanship.

"The maid," as *Fräulein* Schwerdtfeger is styled in official language, wept a good deal after this rebuff, but in the end regained her equilibrium and gave up all thoughts of quitting us.

On another occasion—it was just previous to the carnival festivities of 1893, and the Court was established at the Berlin Schloss—Her Majesty was angry with Schwerdtfeger because fully three days had elapsed since the last new costume evolved from the palace establishment. The Empress demanded to know what her people were doing,



and whether they were so busy with their own affairs as to be unable to attend to her needs.

I was present when Schwerdtfeger reported the case to Frau von Haake: "I will not stand such treatment," she said amid sobs; "the Kaiserin was beside herself with rage, and I actually feared she would strike me. She stormed and fumed and called me names."

"Tut, tut!" broke in the gentlewoman, who knows how short-lived these revolts of royal domestics are, "I am afraid you lack in true Christian humility, my girl. If you were truly loyal to the most-high lady, you would construe even her righteous anger into a blessing, for it may teach you that sincere submissiveness of which we all stand in need."

With tales of royal worldliness on the one hand and of woe on the other I could fill many pages of these memoirs, but there would be little profit in such reading aside from a tendency to emphasize the fact that it is absurd to credit those born in the purple with a higher intellect, more finesse, more charity, less pettiness and less penury, than ordinary mortals. However, I will not close this chapter without recording one signal triumph Her Majesty's much-abused women experienced in the course of years, and at her cost too.

In June, 1892, when Auguste Victoria was *en bonne espérance* for the seventh time in twelve years, she selected for the reception of the Queens of the Netherlands a particularly ugly toilet,—a blue satin dress with an orange front and ditto trimmings. The latter, real masterpieces of the embroiderer's art, were very difficult to sew on; but that notwithstanding, Her Majesty ordered them removed and differently placed three times, compelling the seamstresses to work the whole Sunday until late in the night. Of course, the girls were wroth, and on that account not at

all displeased to see that the costume, which had given them so much trouble, was frightfully unbecoming to their mistress when at last she was arrayed in the glaring colors. To make matters still worse for the royal lady, her complexion was in a sadly muddled state just then. We *Hof-damen* felt deeply chagrined about all this, I assure you. However, the Empress had herself to blame, as she selected the colors against everybody's advice, insisting upon their entire suitability.

We were just debating in our own circle whether it would be prudent to tell Her Majesty what an outrageous figure she cut, when a remark by little Wilhelmina, overheard by one of the maids and in duty reported to Countess von Brockdorff, led to an instant decision and caused the obnoxious dress to be removed without delay.

Think of it! That royal *enfant terrible* said to her mother, on reaching her apartments and probably thinking herself out of ear-shot: "It strikes me *ma tante* looks like one of those cockatoos our soldiers bring from Sumatra."

The *mot* passed from mouth to mouth in the palace, and its appropriateness was generally admitted, under the breath, of course; but if the stories about a contemplated marriage between the houses of Hohenzollern and Orange ever come true, Wilhelmina will certainly regret having used her ready wit against the august "Potsdamer," who may want to take it out of her daughter-in-law in various ways, for the cockatoo story did not remain unknown to her, having come to the all-highest ears, the Emperor's, after much travelling, and William repeated it to "Dona" on the occasion of a domestic row.

As this anecdote indicates, the Empress has little notion of the suitability of colors. She wears all in rotation,

sometimes half a dozen different shades a day. Let us contemplate, for example, Her Majesty's outfit for January 27, 1893, the Kaiser's birthday. On that day she went to breakfast in a silver-gray gown with demi-train, attended church in the chapel of the Schloss, at eleven o'clock, in a visiting toilet of light damask with pink silk, and appeared at luncheon in blue velvet trimmed with white ostrich feathers. At five o'clock the great state dinner took place, when Her Majesty wore a magnificent gown of red brocaded silk with sable, which she changed for a light-green one, heavy with silver embroidery, later in the evening. On the following night, at the Court ball, the Empress made her appearance in a lavender-colored gown, and, horror of horrors! Grand-mistress Countess von Brockdorff did the same, only that my lady's dress was a shade darker. I shall never forget the looks of injured and haughty astonishment and of cringing and alarmed perplexity with which these august women eyed each other as they met in Her Majesty's *salon*. It was too late for the Countess to change her toilet, and Auguste Victoria's temper was spoiled, anyhow. She retired from the entertainment earlier than usual, and the same night I was commanded to send a despatch to Vienna, ordering an entirely original ball-dress for Carnival, original in color, design, and ornamentation, cost what it will. This marvel of uniqueness arrived in due time, with a bill amounting to five thousand florins. Her Majesty wore it twice, and had the satisfaction of seeing Countess Hohenau, not to mention the Princesses of the blood royal, turn green with envy.

Empress Auguste Victoria's robes of state are not quite the tremendously expensive luxuries the public imagines them to be, for, despite all their gorgeousness, they are for the most part things of "shreds and patches," made over and altered time and again. For ground material, velvets,

gold or silver brocades, heavy satin, or *moiré antique* are used, while the ornaments, thread and gold laces, jewels and embroideries encrusted with precious stones, are furnished by the privy or the Crown *trésor* (treasury). After each function, these toilets are ripped up, and their various component parts are put away for future use. They may not be required for two or three, or even ten or twenty years, but their time will come again by and by. The most expensive parts of the Kaiserin's gala dresses are the trains of cloth of silver or gold that cost all the way from twenty to forty thousand marks. Her favorite train is an affair twenty feet long by eight broad, and six pages scarcely know how to handle it, so heavy is the monster. It is of silver brocade, showing the Prussian eagle and the royal emblems in high-relief and in rich colors. A broad strip of ermine edges this right royal mantle.

In the matter of hats, Auguste Victoria is easily the best-dressed woman in Europe, or has been for the last five or six years. As Princess William, Princess Imperial, and during her early years as Empress, the Kaiserin patronized Berlin milliners exclusively, and the result was not encouraging. Here is what the Princess of Meiningen said when her mother, the Empress Frederick, engaged upon that dangerous journey to Paris: "If you love Auguste and myself, bring us hats, hats, hats, hats! They make beautiful millinery ornaments in this town, but don't know how to put them together. To me a German bonnet always looks like next of kin to a recruit's fatigue-cap, while Berlin hats, even the most elaborate, seem to be fashioned *à la Pickelhaube*."

The same idea pervaded the unusually blunt speech of the Princess Philip of Coburg, who had not yet disgraced herself with her Colonel of Hussars, when, at the close of his Vienna visit in the fall of 1892, the Kaiser, while taking

leave of Her Royal Highness, incidentally remarked that he was unable to decide what to bring his wife. "Get her some hats; she needs them, poor thing," cried King Leopold's eldest daughter, who is credited with having inherited all his wicked traits; "a mere private woman as I am, I would not exchange my coronet for the German diadem if at the same time I were compelled to wear the monstrous head-gear your Berliners turn out." The sally struck home, the more so as William has always entertained a high opinion of this Princess, who, it must not be forgotten, is the elder sister of Stephanie, widow of the late Crown Prince Rudolph.

"His Majesty," says Grand-master Count Eulenburg, who often speaks of the affair, "reddened at first and seemed inclined to answer sharply, but, after a little reflection, confessed complete ignorance of the subject, though all present knew that he makes it his business to order the Kaiserin about in matters of toilet as well as in other respects. 'Admitting, cousin, that you are correct in what you say,' His Majesty finally remarked, 'what am I going to do about it? I have not the time to run around millinery-shops at the moment of leaving, and if I order a number of bonnets to be sent to the *Burg*, the bills will be of such magnitude as to break my treasurer's heart, and perhaps myself too.'

"We all laughed at this suggestion," continued His Excellency, and Her Royal Highness fairly shook with merriment as she exclaimed, semi-tragically: 'For the Lord's sake, William, do not become to us in Vienna what the Tecks are to the Prince of Wales in London, or'' (this with fine sarcasm) "'the Lippes to a certain King of Prussia! To forestall such a calamity, let me offer my humble services. With Your Majesty's permission, I will drive with one of your gentlemen'" (here Her Royal

Highness's eyes lit upon the stalwart form of our friend Moltke) "to my own purveyors, buy what is pretty and not too extravagant in price, and bring my finds in triumph to the station, where we will meet an hour from now in our waiting-room. Is that a bargain?"

"The Kaiser," Eulenburg wound up his story, "sealed the agreement by kissing Her Royal Highness's white hands and arm; but she took him by the head and applied three right royal smacks upon his mouth, those to reconcile him for the osculations of state that he would have to give and endure later in the day, as Her Royal Highness put it."

What a time we had at the Neues Palais, when the Kaiser arrived with six bandboxes filled with "that woman's" selections of finery! Pardon: it is "that woman" no longer; we have discovered her name, and without consulting the Almanach de Gotha, at that. Perish the memory of Stephanie's treachery: "Her Royal Highness, the Princess Philip," of all women, has the sweetest taste and kindest disposition! All-highest lips uttered these honeyed sentiments, and soon the whole Schloss, metaphorically speaking, was at the feet of the august Viennese, who, an hour before, had been considered too *frivole* for even casual mention. Reputations are quickly made and lost at Court. Play into their Majesties' hands, contribute to their charities, fawn upon their little weaknesses, and you are *persona grata* in a jiffy; exhibit the slightest bit of originality conflicting with the maddening humdrum of accepted notions, seek solace from the dreary occupations of the average Court life in hemispheres where goldsticks and bigwigs are not wanted, or, worse still, derided, and your name is put upon the index whether it stands on the first leaves of the Continental peerage or not.

The Philip Coburgs had been tabooed in Potsdam for ever so long,—the Prince for his vicious habits; Her

Royal Highness on account of her many indiscretions, which, though not yet<sup>1</sup> public property, were the subject of pretty plain comment in court circles for years. But having turned milliner for Her Majesty, and assured her a triumph in the hat line, all was forgotten, and now we had to join in the praises of Princess Philip as ardently as once in her condemnation. "We" stands for ladies-in-waiting, the royal Princess, wives of grand officers, seamstresses, *Generalinnen*, wardrobe-women, and, indeed, everybody wearing petticoats in and about the palace, for all these people were commanded to come and gaze at those wondrously fine hats, raised on gilded stands and casting curious shadows over the billiard-table, where they stood on parade, while the bright sunlight was playing about them and the Kaiserin sat near to receive congratulations. The milliners from the Kaiserstadt had indeed surpassed themselves! Could there be anything more dainty than that bottle-green velvet *capote* covered with precious stones in dazzling colors? And the light-blue affair, set off by half a dozen swallows,—did the Empress Eugenie, in her palmiest days, wear anything more *chic*? I thought the Kaiserin looked best in a round, flat, black velvet bonnet, with fiery red aigrette, and broad strings to tie under the chin—the simplest of the lot, which she would wear but seldom.

The head-gear exhibition in the royal billiard-room in the fall of 1892 has since been repeated time and again, and the Kaiser's personal accounts are none the better for the innovation, though Her Majesty's are, as *Herr* von Mirbach assured me, with a faint smile, on one of those events, October 22, 1896, which was Auguste Victoria's

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<sup>1</sup> 1892 is the time referred to. Since then the scandal has become public.

thirty-eighth birthday. Not less than nineteen hats graced her table on that day, and the Emperor, who had bought and paid for them, or at least had agreed to do so, seemed to be as happy and proud of these things of beauty as the recipient of the royal gift. What singular passions these Kings of Prussia cultivate! Frederick II would have only light-pink and blue and white furniture in his palaces, and when his numerous dogs ruined the airy silks, he remarked: "Pshaw! if I kept a Pompadour, the cost would be greater still." William insists upon encouraging his wife's insane extravagance, fanning the flame that consumes his and her personal credit, and at the same time racks his brain for make-believes to persuade the people that he is really a very economical gentleman, married to *Frau* Simplicity!

A fitting illustration to this never-grow-weary farce was furnished by a talk I overheard when ordered by Her Majesty to receive the Princess of Sachsen, after the *grand Cour* of congratulations had begun. I was waiting in the vestibule of the palace, to be on hand the moment Her Royal Highness's carriage arrived, and at my elbow stood the House-marshal, delivering the report of the day to a newspaper representative. "The Kaiser's birthday gift," said Count Puckler, "consisted of a few articles of apparel, just as any good citizen of ordinary means might give his wife. 'Times are too hard and money is too scarce to buy diamonds or trinkets not actually needed.' These are the Emperor's own words; mark them, *mein Herr*. And, please, do not forget to state that our most-gracious sovereign lady fully concurred in this all-highest view. Simplicity is still the watchword at the royal Prussian Court, as in bygone days."

A word about the distribution of Court news may be of interest here. Up to a few years ago, an old man, son of a retired royal employee, had a monopoly of them; but



the contract is now in the hands of the official telegraph bureau, which sends a reporter to the *Hoflager* regularly. This gentleman, who must be attired in faultless evening dress, has the *entrée* to the anterooms of both their Majesties at stated hours. There he is allowed to copy the entries of the day-book, kept by the *Kammerdiener* on duty, and which contains minutes of the Kaiser and Kaiserin's official occupations and doings,—when they have risen, when they went on rides or drives, who attended them, whom they have had for dinner, what they propose doing in the evening or next morning, etc.

Interesting as these momentous facts doubtless are, they are inadequate to the wants of *all* newspapers, and so our reporter is continually on the alert for “extras.” Such are clandestinely sold to him in the anterooms, but the best items, I am told, he gathers on leaving the palace over the back-stairs. There the gossips ambush, and sometimes, for a miserable five or ten mark piece, sell him veritable morsels of information.

Next day, when the thing appears in print, the poor scribe is cursed by high and low, and both their Majesties resolve that in the future all doors shall be locked against the reprobate. But what about “the things we *like* to see in the papers,”—anecdotes about “one’s good heart” and about acts of “sublime condescension”? That resolution, hastily made, is just as often abandoned, and the reporter of our vanities is welcomed, or tolerated, year in year out.

Aside from variety in the line of presents, one Queen’s birthday passes exactly like another in the big Potsdam palace. The Kaiser, the children, and the members of the household, the royal relatives, the diplomatic corps, and personal friends offer congratulations one after another. There are receptions, gala meals, concert and theatrical performances,—a long dozen of them,—but the feature

that has always struck me as the most noteworthy was the decoration of the table-covers on which the gifts from high and low (even servants are permitted to contribute) are exhibited. They consist of wreaths, made of flowers, leaves and fruits from the royal gardens, a pretty and original arrangement, exhibiting the choicest products of the Sans Souci vineyards and hot-houses. It is a custom introduced by the great Frederick, who loved his fruit-trees even more ardently than his million dollars' worth of snuff-boxes.



## CHAPTER VI

While the Empress, following her husband's example as much as her own inclination, fully lives up to the maxim of "displaying the insignia of her position," the impecuniosity of her childhood days is shown by the scantiness of her body-linen, which occupies two moderately-sized chests of drawers. Foreigners hear a great deal of the affluence German women enjoy with respect to hempen goods; they read of presses stocked with every variety of the homespun and manufactured article, piled up in stacks of a hundred each, bound with pretty ribbons, and showing many different designs, damask, silk-threaded, and embroidered in colors. It is all very beautiful to look at, and no stranger entering a German house for the second time is spared an introduction to madame's treasures, which are often heirlooms from times immemorial, and which will go to her daughters and grandchildren and great-grandchildren, being increased and enlarged and extended continually. So it has always been, and this state of things will probably continue to puzzle citizens of other countries, though experience may have taught them that, when living with a German family, they cannot, for the life of them, obtain more than one clean sheet in two weeks. Generally speaking, the German housewife regards her linen more as articles of show than of utility, and, besides, a profusion of house linen does not signify a corresponding abundance of *lingerie*.

Of this, history affords at least one august example, which female instructors of young Princesses never fail to mention when lecturing upon cleanliness. I heard *Fräulein* von Perpigna, mistress of the Court of Emperor Frederick's daughters, recount the incident more than once to her charges. "The beautiful Caroline of Brunswick," she used to begin, "brought whole ship-loads of boxes filled with the most exquisite linen with her to London, where she was to see for the first time her affianced husband, the Prince of Wales, afterward George IV; but although the British Ambassador, the Earl of Malmesbury, had implored Her Highness 'to be particular,' explaining that the laundry bills of the ladies of the Court of Carlton House were as high almost as their accounts with the milliners, the princely bridegroom, after embracing her, was forced to turn around with a snort of disgust. 'Harris,' he cried to his equerry, 'I am not well; pray get me a glass of brandy.'

"'Sir,' interposed that gentleman, 'had you not better have a glass of water?'

"'No,' answered the Prince, very much out of humor; 'I must tell this to the Queen.'

"The Queen of England," concluded *Fräulein* von Perpigna, "had intended Louise of Strelitz, Your Royal Highnesses' illustrious ancestress, for her son's wife. The King, however, had decided in favor of Caroline. When, therefore, Prince George found himself repelled from, instead of attracted to, his bride, he quite naturally wanted to pour out his complaints into his mother's ears."

Most probably, Auguste Victoria heard this story told in the same homely fashion, and it was not lost upon her, for, though she has been with us since 1881, the servants continue to find fresh reasons for admiring the sovereign lady on account of her extraordinary nicety. I know little about the intimate affairs of other royal personages; but it is strange

to hear my mistress lauded to the skies, or condemned for a spendthrift, according to the speaker's bringing up, because she requires her bath and clean linen for bed and body daily and insists upon washing her hands "almost every hour, and always in warm water." The wonderment is essentially German,—the outcome of Anglo-Saxon animosity; still, with all that, the Kaiserin dares not fly in the face of Prussian tradition. I know I am challenging belief when I say that Princes of this reigning family are not allowed to have more than six shirts, while the *trousseaux* of Princesses must not contain more than twenty-four sets of underwear, "to be renewed annually," yet these facts are mentioned by trustworthy German historians for the last two hundred years. "Even when entering upon a campaign, the royal Hohenzollerns never take more than half a dozen shirts along," says that veracious chronicler, Vehse, and though Carlyle skips it, others state on authority that Frederick the Great went to his grave in a shirt furnished by his *Kammerhusar* Strutzki, none of the late Majesty's linen "being fit for decent burial."

As to the paucity of the *trousseaux* of Prussian Princesses, I need but refer the sceptical to any of the Berlin or Potsdam dealers in *lingerie*, all of whom will endorse my statement with many expressions of woe, and perhaps mention the fact that the case seems not altogether hopeless, seeing that the Empress Frederick, at the weddings of her two younger daughters, Victoria, Princess of Lippe, and Marguerite of Hesse, went beyond the established allowance by adding six pairs of black riding-drawers to the bridal outfits.

Those sable unmentionables!—what a row they caused after their first appearance in a Leipziger Strasse show-window, in the beginning of November, 1890. Some foreign

correspondent had made fun of the royal *Beinkleider*,—leg-clothes, as they are styled,—and the Princess and her mother and the Kaiser all worked themselves into a towering rage over it. But to return to the Kaiserin.

She did not bring much *lingerie* from the tumble-down castle Primkenau (now rebuilt), and, Hohenzollern tradition prohibiting augmentation on an extensive scale, Her Majesty's linen outfit remains of a very poor order. Aside from white petticoats, that are essential to every grand toilet, the Empress has scarcely enough body-linen to last her from one washing day to another, and when she goes on a journey her *Kammerfrau* is not infrequently obliged to visit a draper's shop in the city, where the imperial party stops, and buy a few odd things to help out. I have often accompanied or represented *Frau* von Haake on such errands, and it amused me to observe how the tradespeople regarded our plight. There is, for instance, a shop-keeper in Cassel willing to swear that the Empress requires his goods merely to compensate him for the loss he suffered by the wiping out of the *Kurfürst's* dynasty, a view which makes him contented, and, by assiduous publication, has increased his bank account very considerably in the course of years, for Her Majesty's loyal subjects in the old-time capital are of course anxious to buy in the very store that supplies the wants of the sovereign lady. As to suspecting that the Empress-Queen bought a pair of *Beinkleider* or a single chemise to fill an actual want, the thought would never enter any one's head, for in Germany it is almost a crime to buy linen in less than half-dozen lots; only play-actresses and students do such unconventional things. But what are an imperial Majesty's women to do when the all-highest stock of a dozen pairs of drawers runs out? If it happens at home, the maid on duty sometimes takes a left-off garment and irons it up; but this is permissible

only when the Kaiserin has a cold, as she is in the habit of sniffing her garments over to find out whether or not they have been properly aired, and woe to the attendant found guilty of practising a fraud on the sovereign lady. That the paucity of her *lingerie* is to blame, Auguste Victoria would never admit, and the person brave enough to suggest as much has yet to be born.

Her Majesty's handkerchiefs are the cause of similar troubles. She owns a dozen plain *batiste*, half a dozen color-embroidered and four lace handkerchiefs; but as she insists upon having one of the latter for every demi or full dress affair, her women are obliged to wash these delicate *mouchoirs* in the room. That under the circumstances they cannot last long is very evident, as is also the fact that the German Empress has to go without a fresh handkerchief once in a while, or else has to use one only imperfectly washed.

All Her Majesty's underclothes are made of German "shirting," and are not a bit better than those worn by well-to-do women generally; even her night-dresses are severely plain, not to say ugly. Only when the Emperor returns from one of his journeys his wife surprises him by arraying herself for that one night in a gorgeous robe of *batiste*, richly embroidered and interlaced with ribbons.

In a previous chapter I said the imperial couple did not know the meaning of true comfort. The above emphasizes this estimate, and the fact that of all the people employed in the palace none is capable of regularly attending to the Empress's laundry, or the Kaiser's either for that matter, gives it additional weight. But there is, besides, a very serious aspect to the matter: the person who launders both their Majesties' body-linen being a poor Potsdam woman, who serves numerous families in town besides the all-highest



one, may unwillingly carry disease into the palace. I can never quite rid myself of that fear when

“ — that self-same washerwoman,  
Doing washing for the pair,  
Humming, for their linen cometh  
Every week to wash and air,” —

pushing a covered basket on a wheelbarrow before her. It contains the articles laundered and is to carry back the soiled things. *Frau* Schultze charges the Court stiff prices, and, moreover, occasionally gets her accounts mixed, which leads to petty squabbles.

There have been quarrels about “ the King’s dirty linen ” before in Potsdam, when Voltaire was the *blanchisseur* and Frederick’s bad poetry the article in want of cleansing ; at that period, I believe, the phrases “ working for the King of Prussia ” and throwing away one’s opportunities became synonymous ; but while some of the causes leading to the estrangement of the two philosophers were petty enough, God knows, not even the Frenchman’s alleged auction of candles saved by him out of his allowance at Sans Souci exceeded in point of paltriness the fuss often occasioned in the Neues Palais by *Frau* Schultze’s overcharges or mixing up of accounts.

The Empress, you must know, pays her laundry bills out of her own pocket, and whenever *Frau* Schultze charges her for a couple of handkerchiefs, or perchance a collar belonging to the Kaiser’s list, she grows very indignant and intimates that everybody is robbing her. If, on the other hand, the same happens with regard to *her* things, His Majesty’s *Kammerdiener* raises a row such as one would associate with a trivial bourgeois establishment, perhaps, but never with an imperial household. Those writers on lives royal who forever harp on the sublimity of their patrons

should ask permission to attend the comings and goings of that old washerwoman but once ; they would be speedily cured of their highfaluting notions, and learn that human nature is the same in all stations of life. Great ladies are, after all, but weak women, and a princely establishment does not even obviate the possibility of ignoble circumvention. This the first assistant of the imperial hair-dresser-by-appointment, *Herr Ardeljana*, in Vienna, found out to his sorrow. *Ardeljana*, of whom more anon, dresses Her Majesty's hair on state occasions ; ordinarily maids perform that office, but in the winter of 1893 the Kaiserin came to the conclusion that the girls would no longer do, and that she was entitled to a *coiffeur* of her own. *Frau von Haake* was accordingly commanded to find such a person, and learning that one of *Ardeljana's* "artists" was just then on a visit in Berlin, the *Kammerfrau* ordered him to come to the palace. The young man obeyed with many pleasant anticipations, and, after giving complete satisfaction, was told by the Empress that he might remain, although both *Haake* and *Baron von Mirbach* opposed the innovation for financial reasons. Indeed, the Court-marshal and Her Majesty had quite a tiff about the matter, into which I myself was drawn to my consummate dismay, for Her Majesty quoted me as having informed her that none of the leaders of fashion in Russia and England would think of doing without the daily attendance of a *friseur*. At any rate, *Ardeljana II*, as he was called, stayed, and, beginning with March 1, dressed the Empress's hair twice a day. When their Majesties entered upon their Italian tour in the third week of April, to lend additional splendor to the silver wedding of King Umberto and Queen Marguerite, the Viennese was taken along as a matter of course, and that he performed his work successfully is admitted by all in the imperial party. In fact, Queen

Marguerite's ladies, notably the Princess Pallavicini and the Marquise di Breme, importuned me more than once to ask permission of Her Majesty that Ardeljana be "lent" to them to teach their own *coiffeurs* some of his new styles, a request which I had to decline for fear of offending my august mistress.

The Kaiserin took up her summer residence at the Neues Palais immediately upon her return from abroad, and the Viennese remaining with us, it was generally understood that Ardeljana II had at last received his appointment. Therefore I was not surprised when, one morning in August, he asked to see me "on Her Majesty's business."

"*Gnädige Frau*," he cried, as the door closed behind him, and I noticed a change in his appearance: his cheeks, which bore a healthy glow when he first came to the palace, were drawn and haggard and his linen was not of the spruceness becoming to a servant of royalty, — "*Frau Gräfin*," he repeated, "I am hungry, and unless my claim for salary is passed upon, I beg of you to procure for me board and lodging in the palace at once."

This speech dumfounded me, the more so as the man's looks confirmed his words. Hunger stalking in the shadow of the throne! "Tell me how you got into this plight," I said, at the same time pouring out a glass of cognac, which he quickly swallowed.

When the Empress, so ran his story, told him in March last she desired him to remain in her service, he did not bother about obtaining a formal appointment, esteeming Her Majesty's word fully equal to a crested and sealed patent. Even the Court-marshal's refusal to lodge and feed him in the palace he regarded lightly, knowing that his former master, *Herr Ardeljana*, had likewise run amuck of that dignitary at one time and had had the satisfaction of triumphing over the haughty Baron in the end.

So he took a room in the neighborhood of our residence and boarded himself, expecting his affairs to be straightened out day by day. Then came the trip to Rome, on which he was treated like any other body-attendant, and fared exceptionally well. When the Court was established at the Neues Palais, however, he was again compelled to find his own living, and in this way continued until his money gave out, about a week ago. Ever since then his meals had been scanty and far between, and at the time he appeared before me he had not tasted food for eighteen hours. I gave the poor man a mark to procure dinner at the mess-room, and then went in search of Madame von Haake, whom I found in a lively *tête-à-tête* with Baron Mirbach.

"Your Ladyship did wrong to interfere with my department and encourage this fellow," said the marshal hotly, at the moment I entered.

"Pray, quarrel with Her Majesty about that," retorted the *Kammerfrau*. "The Kaiserin ordered me to engage this man, and I executed her commands. That you have no money to pay him is quite another matter. At the same time, I beg Your Excellency not to charge me with messages to our royal mistress on the subject. She forbade me to mention the matter to her, instructing me to tell you, at the same time, that she needed Ardeljana, and that you must find his wages somehow."

Here I stepped in. "It is not a question of salary," I said, "but of preventing a horrible scandal, liable to involve the whole Court." Then I repeated Ardeljana's story as he had recounted it to me, adding: "This half-starved man is now in the mess-room, and I can but advise to send him back to Vienna with a decent compensation. A hungry person is always dangerous, and I tremble lest this one tell his experience in the Kaiser's palace to *Herren* Bebel and Liebknecht."

Crown Prince Rudolph—I entreat Your Majesty and the ladies present not to suspect me of a desire to desecrate the late Prince's memory—had arranged a feast of that kind at Meyerling with several boon companions, and when the beautiful Baroness Vecsra refused to disrobe, her lover, drunk with wine and passion, pulled out a revolver and shot her. Then (it was regicide most horrible!),” and poor Ardeljana's voice became almost inaudible under the stress of loyal emotion, “the army officers, who had witnessed the scene, drew their sabres and in their anger and indignation cut our Prince Imperial to pieces. That was the reason why no one was allowed to see the illustrious dead.”

While the above speaks well for Ardeljana's information on topics of high life, his anecdotes of the Crown Princess Stephanie and the Princess Philip of Coburg prove entertaining to a degree. We learn from him that Stephanie's money troubles are a source of unceasing annoyance to herself and the imperial family; her income, sadly reduced in consequence of the late Rudolph's debts, scarcely suffices to keep up a Court. “Instead of discharging her obligations to society in the usual fashion,” says the Queen's chronicler, “she surrounds herself with squads of green officers and aristocratic striplings that have nothing but their youth to recommend them—neither brains, nor reputation, nor even wealth.” The Princess Coburg—but her escapades have, by this time, become common property, and I have referred already to Her Majesty's dislike for that woman, and how, for a time at least, it was dispelled.

After arresting the Kaiserin's interest by small talk on topics of the day, it is, of course, easy for the cunning *friseur* to put in a word or two for himself, and right here is his opportunity to get even with his official tormentors. They fed him on pork, and he obtained royal leave to select his own menus; they lodged him in the servants'

quarters, and the Empress ordered that an apartment in a first-class hotel be hired for him, etc. At the same time it must be admitted that Ardeljana is past-master of his trade.

It is a real pleasure to see this man handle the variegated contents of his many boxes of *chignons*, *toupettes*, semi-wigs, braids, and locks of hair, all of the Empress's color, and see him try them successfully either on the Empress's head or on a wax figure bearing a striking likeness to her, so nimble and delicate, so full of artistic enthusiasm is his work, while the Kaiserin, on her part, never seems to grow weary of these exhibitions, though her poor head be buffeted and pawed over and stuck with pins and loaded with flowers and feathers and jewels whole mornings at a time.

The fashions finally adopted as the most becoming are taught to the chamber-women by demonstrations on the figure-head, and Ardeljana never departs until the maids are thoroughly perfect in all the styles.

As might be imagined, the cost of employing the great Vienna *coiffeur* is equal to a captain's pay. There are his fare and his time, and, last but not least, his styles are to be paid for,—“ideas,” as he calls them, calculated out in the seclusion of the study and original in every respect. All his inventions that please Her Majesty are acquired solely for her use, though, of course, they cannot be patented like the cut of a heel, or a shoe-string fastener. Indeed, the Empress *wants* them copied, and as quickly as it is done starts another of Ardeljana's styles, thus doing her share toward living up to the promises the Emperor made after assuming the government, viz.: that Berlin, henceforth, shall dictate the world's fashions, as Paris did under Napoleon and Eugenie. A great stretch this, from limpid, lively, fascinating Paris to the staid, heavy, *doctrinaire* German capital; but, to use another of William's phrases, “the King's will is the highest law,” and every

one does as well as personal efforts permit. And, from this point of view, the Kaiserin's many extravagances in the line of dress are scarcely so unreasonable as some Berlin gossips would have us believe, for Her Majesty's example induces society to follow suit, and home trade is benefited, though most of the models are bought in foreign lands.

If they were not, where should they come from? I asked this question of a Berlin shop-keeper who was pouring his complaints of the Empress's infatuation for foreign goods into my ear, at the same time petitioning me to suggest a change, for this man, like many of his kind, adheres to the belief that a *Hofdame* needs but throw out a hint in her mistress's presence to have it at once adopted and carried out. "We are quite as proficient as creators as any Frenchmen or Viennese," he asserted hotly.

There is the rub! These Berliners think all the world must conform to native taste; but, surely, every woman of fashion will side with Her Majesty's policy, that lays all the world under contribution for models and selects therefrom.

There is, however, this much to be said in favor of the Berliners. They are good imitators. Look at the Berlin hats of 1897-1898, and the monstrous things put up for sale before her *chic* Highness of Coburg became imperial bonnet purveyor by proxy! And think of the many thousand hands Her Majesty's liking for braided goods has kept busy since 1890! Though Berliners claim to be the creators of that particular style, I can vouch for the fact that the Kaiserin first noticed it in the model of a jacket imported from Paris. "That kind of work," she said at the time, "ought to be well done in Germany, where labor requiring patience and minute application is sought for." Orders for a number of braided garments were forthwith given to a Berlin house, and by this act the fashion was

established which, in the course of years, conferred upon thousands of smart needle-women the blessing of abundant work.

This chapter on the Kaiserin's gowns and finery would certainly be incomplete without brief mention of the rules of Court mourning. There is a tradition that the tabooing of black dresses is a peculiarity of the Russian Court, founded upon some superstition connected with Romanoff history. That may be true or not, but a Prussian *Hofdame*, venturing into the imperial presence in a dark gown at a time when mourning has not been officially declared, would be turned back as unceremoniously as might be any colleague of hers at the Winter Palace, and that in spite of the fact that black is very becoming to Her Majesty.

The sovereign lady never has less than fifty to sixty mourning outfits ready, that number comprising all the different degrees, from deep to complimentary and memorial mourning, the latter being worn on the anniversaries of the deaths of near relatives.

Yet there are distinctions even in deep mourning. For instance: after the death of old Emperor William, which was certainly the most painful loss that could befall the Prince Imperial and his consort, the Crown Princess wore black woollen dresses trimmed with crape, and a veil which reached to the hem of her skirt, enveloping the entire figure; but when the demise of Frederick III had made her Empress, her gowns for the house, as well as for public occasions, were made entirely of crape; and on her head she wore, from morn to night, a black cap with trailing veil. This costume seemed all the harder to endure, as Her Majesty was then expecting her fifth child, and when I made my first official bow to her, in the garden of the Marble Palace, a few days after my installation, I could not refrain from suggesting a change, considering the hot



weather and her condition. But the Empress would not hear of it. "I owe this little inconvenience to my exalted station," she said, "and my dress is in strict accordance with etiquette."

Long Danish gloves of dull black go with this costume, as with every other degree of Court mourning save the slightest, while woollen dresses without crape, and finally black silk and damask gowns, succeed the sombre garment of the initial stages of deep mourning. As an intermediary from mourning to every-day costumes the Kaiserin wears black velvet, a material that used to set off her figure, when it was yet in its prime, to even greater perfection than the preceding silks and damasks, all these costumes being richly trimmed with jets and laces.

## CHAPTER VII

On November 1, 1892, the riding-school of the Berlin *Marstall* (royal stables) was gay with the women of the Court and society. His Majesty proposed to make this year's Hubertus hunt the event of the season, and all were going to help him do it. Hence the preparations. Some of us had to become used to fresh horses, others were obliged to learn anew the intricacies of the various bugle-calls. Quite unexpectedly the Hereditary Princess of Meiningen walked in with her lady-in-waiting, Baroness Ramin. I saw at once that Her Royal Highness had indulged in a lively breakfast, as they say in Berlin, for her face was flushed, and she addressed pleasantries to everybody, and even promised to ride *à la* Florence Dixey if somebody would lend her a pair of breeches.

"Nonsense!" cried the Princess of Hohenzollern, *née* Princess Bourbon. "Lottchen is bragging, I assure you, ladies; you all know that she wears the trousers. What more does she want?"

"The real article, cousin, the r-e-a-l article," retorted Lottchen, adding, with a shrug of the shoulders: "what suffices for the *ménage* will not do at all for the *manège*, especially when such puritan critics as Countess Brockdorff are about."

Then turning to *Mademoiselle* von Ramin, she said, loud enough for everybody in the ring to hear: "Now I will

show you how my sweet sister-in-law" (meaning the Empress) "mounts."

She had her horse brought round to a platform reached by three steps, and, ascending laboriously, raised herself on tiptoe and let herself fall into the saddle with a thud that caused the horse to stagger.

"Just like a majestic sack of flour, is it not?" she cried. "The more pity for the beast." Then she rode off, urging the chestnut to all sorts of caprioles and fancy steps.

Princess Therese was at Her Royal Highness's side like a flash, and as they cantered about, each trying to outdo the other in feats of daring, both laughed boisterously.

But if courtiers have long ears, Nemesis has legs of corresponding calibre. Indeed, in this case the dread goddess must have worn seven-league boots, for twelve hours after the impertinent words had fallen from privileged lips all who had been at the *Marstall* were quietly informed that ladies were not wanted at the forthcoming outing,—neither *Hofdamen*, nor Princesses of the blood royal! It being the first time that the Meiningen, Hohenzollern, and Hohenau coterie were turned down publicly, so to speak, the sensation in polite circles was tremendous, and while few quarrelled with Princess Charlotte for what she had said, all agreed that the Empress was right in asserting her position as vigorously as she had done.

Next day it was my good fortune to attend Her Majesty at Schloss Stern, the starting-point of the Hubertus hunt in Grunewald, and I must say her appearance was quite the reverse of the picture drawn by the Princess of Meiningen. Was it the English hunting-costume that proved so very becoming to the sovereign lady, or was it the presence of the Emperor in his red coat and silk hat, or the recollection of the victory just won? Auguste Victoria looked fresh and rosy and resplendent as she galloped over the

frozen ground, herself and Countess von Bassewitz being the only ladies in the "field."

Of course, the whole hunt was arranged with a view to fatigue their Majesties as little as possible, and, accordingly, the boar was set free at a point where he could be brought to bay within a quarter of an hour after the start, a programme carried out with surprising promptness and despatch this time. I say this time, for the reader must not run away with the idea that in our sphere promises are always kept or commands always obeyed. As a matter of record, royalty employs in its army of retainers scores of laggards, and while I admit that all-highest personages boast no special virtues entitling them to a higher standard of ethics than Mr. Smith or Mrs. Brown can lay claim to, I must not disguise the fact that they are subject to the same routine of annoyances as yourself and neighbors.

I remember that on the occasion of a visit to the Neues Palais by the late William Walter Phelps, who was American Minister in Berlin in the early nineties, Her Majesty offered to show the baby to this amiable gentleman, and, being on duty, I was requested to fetch the child.

"May it please Your Majesty," I said, bowing low, "unless I am very much mistaken, the Prince drove out with his nurse a couple of minutes ago."

"That is impossible, Countess," said the Kaiserin. "I distinctly told Mrs. Matcham she must not venture to leave before lunch."

To make sure, I repaired to the nursery, where I found that my surmise was correct.

"But why did nurse disobey my instructions?" exclaimed Her Majesty, when I returned without the child.

"Begging Your Majesty's pardon, she told Countess Brockdorff she knew herself when it was best to take out the youngster."

I had naturally hesitated to make this blunt report ; but the Kaiserin took the English woman's impudence good-naturedly, and turning to Mr. Phelps, with a smile, said : "You perceive, Mr. Minister, we are all in the same boat with respect to servants. They are the real masters of every household. If you want to see that baby, I shall have to temporize with Mrs. Matcham."

To return to our subject, the master of the hunt does not always show so lucky a hand as on the occasion described. The very next year, in 1894, Mr. Boar gave his keepers the slip too soon, and, having gained nearly four minutes' time over the hounds, led them a merry chase through Grunewald toward Spandau, their Majesties following with the well-peopled "field,"—that is to say, the latter kept together during the first mile or two, but, later, redcoats began to drop out, until at the *Ha-la-lit* ("there goes") scarcely a baker's dozen reported, among them, on his high English hunter, the Emperor, very proud of his achievement, but also (this was a matter of common report at Court) not a little vexed over the *faux pas* that turned the customary royal pig-trot into something resembling a real, live fox-race.

Kaiser Wilhelm felt, I suppose, that for him to engage in such violent exercise was tempting fate, considering that, while his right arm only is of practical use in the management of the horse, exceptional care must be exercised for the protection of the other,—not an easy undertaking while galloping among trees and through thickets. An overhanging branch, or refractory behavior on the part of the mount, may be attended by the gravest consequences.

The Empress, so Countess von Bassewitz told us in the evening, made the gentlemen wait quite a long while before she hove in sight, escorted by her *Kammerherr* von der Knesebeck, which latter was loud in denunciations of

Her Majesty's horse, which, he cried, lost his wind after the first quarter of an hour.

Exciting as the hunt had been for their Majesties, both Kaiser and Kaiserin missed the best part of the fun. That, as usual when Her Royal Highness is around, followed in the wake of Therese Trani, the spouse of the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern.

Madame Therese, a daughter of Louis *des Deux Siciles*, is the life of every party, whether she visits the petty Court of Sigmaringen and, by her frivolities, causes her royal mother-in-law, a Princess of Portugal, to squirm, or interpolates her speech with *risqué* German phrases, affecting not to understand the meaning of the words; whether she takes pot-luck in the mess-room of some Potsdam regiment, or encourages her husband's young comrades to drag her along the lawn by her feet in imitation of a practice introduced by a famous ancestress, the *Dauphine*, Duchess of Burgundy (this latter sport is sometimes carried on in the garden of their Highnesses' villa in Augusta Strasse, Potsdam); whether she comes to Court and maddens "Dona" by coquetting with the Emperor, or entertains her neighbors at a state dinner with an account of her first confinement, which unexpectedly occurred at a one-horse Mecklenburg watering-place, while her *accoucheuse* was in Berlin and the *layette*, ordered from England, was in the keeping of the custom house; whether she dances, plays cards, smokes cigarettes, or attends a "churching,"—there is always something to remember of one's meeting with this lively young woman. They say her brother-in-law, Karl Anton of Hohenzollern, had to leave Potsdam by night and in a fog (in 1890), the Kaiser having granted him a six-weeks' furlough in order that the Hereditary Prince's just wrath might have time to cool. Afterward, they say, lovesick Karl Anton was sent into exile at Cassel. They also say

Karl Anton married Josephine of Flanders, an unhappy creature hardly able to speak a sentence connectedly (her articulation is so faulty that not one out of a hundred persons is able to understand her),—they say Karl Anton married Josephine in order to obtain leave to return to Potsdam and occasionally catch a glimpse of jolly Therese, but it is just as likely that the pair joined hands in order to “keep the money in the family” (there are no end of *on dits*), yet Her Royal Highness is certainly the last person to care. And her husband? He exhibited some fine passion, when at last he found out that he was being cuckolded by the gay *Uhlán*, but has since settled down to a philosophical sort of life. The Princess he put in charge of Colonel von Bachmayer, his Court-marshal, an elderly gentleman of good manners and great energy, who follows Her Royal Highness wherever she goes and keeps her out of trouble to the best of his ability.

*Herr* von Bachmayer rode in Madame Therese's train, too, after that obstinate pig, but he was not alone. Far from it. There were, besides Karl Anton, a host of cavalymen and sports.

Her Royal Highness had the best horse, and a start of fifty paces. “Heigh-ho!” “*Houp-là!*” “*Ventre à terre!*”—she was bound to get to Spandau before their Majesties had passed Hundekehlensee, if she kept it up. Her horse did, but not Her Royal Highness.

When Therese was urging her steed through a clump of trees with overhanging branches, the tragedy of the forest of Ephraim was certainly most foreign to her mind. But history repeats itself. Her Royal Highness's skirt caught in the branches as did Absalom's hair, and she was left suspended, while her long-legged hunter pressed on. The men witnessed the bloodless accident with delighted wonderment, but before they could reach the unhappy King's

daughter, she was on her hands and knees, and a wide rent in the seat of her trousers showed where her tailor had skimped the cloth. The skirt was still hanging overhead.

Now a dozen cavaliers drew rein and dismounting assisted Therese to her feet. She struggled. "*Non, non*; don't you see I *must* sit down?"

"No," said *Herr* von Bachmayer, in tones of authority, "Your Royal Highness will stand with your back to the tree, while we will rearrange your skirt in front."

Sound advice this, and it was quickly followed.

"Now will Your Royal Highness gaze at the tree for a while?" suggested the Colonel.

"*Oh, ich habe so Scham!*" ("I am so ashamed!"), faltered the Princess, between giggles.

"All unmarried men turn about face!" cried *Herr* von Bachmayer. Ours is a well-disciplined army, and the young men obeyed while Princess Therese turned around, and, standing in the attitude of the Venus de Medici, allowed Karl Anton to draw enough hair-pins from her head to fasten what was left of the skirt onto her waist. Meanwhile, one of the reserve horses had been fetched and the merry crowd started off again. In the evening, Her Royal Highness returned home in a coupé, secured at Spandau. The story, with all details, as above related, is her own. She told it to her chum, Charlotte of Meiningen, adding, with a silvery laugh: "As I heard all those men galloping up to where I was lying, I was reminded of the question the nuns of Brabant put to General Dumouriez" (who commanded the invading French army in 1792): "*Quand est-ce, que nous serons violées?*"

*Herr* von der Kneesebeck's criticism of the royal hunter that failed was not a mere excuse, as might be surmised; all Her Majesty's horses are selected more with reference to handsome appearance and strength than to juvenile



fire. Indeed, Auguste Victoria seldom rides one under the age of ten to twelve years, although, as a general rule, a decade is the age-limit for animals in the Kaiser's stables. Moreover, her horses are so perfectly trained and of such lamb-like disposition that, to quote once more the Princess of Meiningen, "they will not wink an eye or move an ear except on most gracious, all-highest command." Her Royal Highness's bit of comedy, depicting the Kaiserin in the act of mounting, is likewise founded on fact: a portable platform is kept in all the royal stables and parks.

I have frequently attended Her Majesty on horseback, alternating with *Fräulein* von Gersdorff and Countess Bassewitz in this pleasant duty, our cavalcade including, besides one of the chamberlains, the saddle-master and one or two grooms, but it always looked to me as if Her Majesty was not fond of the sport. I think she practises riding merely to be in the fashion, to exhibit her courage, and because she has an idea that she looks well *à la* Amazon,—fallacies all of them. An Empress should command the mode, instead of submitting to it; fortitude, she might argue, is but a matter of temperament, or apprenticeship, if it comes high; as for cutting a dashing appearance, that depends entirely upon circumstances.

We have seen Her Majesty radiant with good-nature and looking exceedingly well in her festive dress as she rode out from Castle Stern, but her every-day habit, a black costume and silk hat, is not at all becoming. And in uniform she looks a perfect fright, not on account of the dress so much as because of her cocked chapeau, which replaces the cuirassiers' steel cap. It is large, of white felt, brim pinned thrice up, the crown bent in and trimmed with white ostrich-tips; in front an *aigrette* of brilliants stands out, "fine feathers" all; but the combination is entirely unsuitable to the imperial lady who, to make

matters worse, is obliged to add a tulle veil to shield her weak eyes from the sun.

If she only knew how that *Dreimaster* spoils her appearance! but, needless to say, no one dares so much as to breathe an objection. And, considering all, it would be the height of folly to do so, and risk, perhaps, a whole season of royal displeasure, as I myself might have found out to my sorrow, had I followed my impulse and persisted in telling unwelcome truths when, in June, 1895, Her Majesty was about to attend the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the battle of Hohenfriedberg, of which more in a later chapter.

"I have a good mind to advise the Kaiserin to get a new head-covering for the parade," I said to *Herr* von Mirbach a week or ten days before the event came off.

"It would be a gracious thing, no doubt," answered he; "but let Your Ladyship be warned that it is dangerous to mention before the all-highest ears facts that have the sting of possible offence in them. Ask the Princess of Meiningen's *Hofdame* for particulars, if you will not take my word for it."

Charlotte of Meiningen being the only person at Court that speaks her mind about everybody and everything to everybody, I was naturally anxious to ascertain in what way her passion for candid observations got her into trouble.

Ramin at first hesitated to take me into the secret, but after a while relented, and told me what follows.

At the beginning of the last carnival season, Princess "Lottchen" wrote a humorous note to her imperial brother, advising him not to wear the red gala dress he is so fond of sporting at the balls, as it was not at all becoming to his style of beauty.

In answer, William sent an extract from a Russian historical work, G. P. Danilevski's "Princess Tarakanova," which, he said, he was just then reading.

"My mistress," continued the *Hofdame*, "thought at first His Majesty merely desired to impress upon her that he, of all Princes, had succeeded in mastering the difficult Muscovite tongue, but observing at the end of the sheet the sentence: 'What a pity summary punishment is out of date,' twice underlined, she became anxious to read the whole.

"Here is a copy of the translation sent to Her Royal Highness," said *Mademoiselle* von Ramin, taking some closely-written pages of note-paper from her *secrétaire*. "Listen," and she read aloud:

"Marie Dimitrievna was the wife of one of Catherine the Second's much-valued officers, Major-General Kojin. She was lively, beautiful, and a veritable chatterbox, telling all the world all she knew, or imagined she knew, together with careless comment upon people's behavior. No one was safe from her tattle, no one, not even the Empress. Once she took it into her pretty head to speak of Her Majesty's relations to Potemkin with a freedom altogether out of place in Russia. The Empress heard of it, and forthwith issued an order to a stalwart member of the Secret Police, who, at the same time, held a high post at Court.

"At ten o'clock to-night," so read Catherine's *lettre de cachet*, 'go to the masked *redoute* held at the mansion of General Kojin. Seek out the *Generaliska*, and, without letting either her guests or her husband or servants know what is going on, place her in your carriage and bring her to the Secret Department. In one of the inner rooms have the lady stripped and give her a taste of corporal punishment as a warning against the folly of babbling and of criticising personages who must be held above gossip. Having soundly whipped Marie Dimitrievna, return her to her friends, after commanding, in my name, that she fulfil all her engagements with the dancers and never breathe a word about the incident, lest it be repeated at an early opportunity.'

"This programme was religiously carried out, and the *Generaliska* never talked about it or criticised anybody in future."

Here the Kaiser's translation broke off, and the words of regret, above referred to, were inserted in large, impressive letters.

Riding and walking are the only bodily exercises my mistress indulges in, aside from dancing once or twice a year at a certain private ball held at their Majesties' apartments in Berlin. These *soirées dansantes* must not be confounded with the great Court balls in the White Hall, when all is state and pomp and *ennui*, and the Emperor and Empress leave the throne only once during the whole course of the evening to say a few official nothings to some Minister, Ambassador, or other dignitary. The annual dancing-parties are held in the *Pfeilersaal*, once the *salle d'armes* of Frederick the Great, where his body-guard used to hold forth. The lofty parlor now affords communication between both Majesties' private chambers, one end of it opening into the Empress's *salon*, where Watteau's celebrated painting, "The Embarkment for Cythera," delights the eye.

A few days before our private ball in the winter of 1893, my mistress told me she was going to trip the light fantastic in accordance with the Emperor's wishes. "I will therefore trouble you to examine the barrier of living plants, hiding the musicians, most carefully," she continued, "for I do not want those men to see me. There should be no loop-holes, and if you find it necessary to have a screen behind the shrubbery, order one by all means."

I suggested that a screen might spoil the airy decorative effect.

"Maybe," replied the Kaiserin, "and then the Emperor would be displeased. Well, you must make the plants do, but have them so placed as to form an impenetrable wall."

"I beg Your Majesty's pardon," I made bold to remark, "Court history has it that your great ancestress, Queen Louise, was not only passionately fond of dancing, but was imbued by the ambition to dance in public. According to reliable chroniclers, she went through many a minuet at the

Opera House yonder, while thousands of her royal subjects looked on and applauded her efforts."

"Yes, yes, the Kaiser rehearsed these events many times, and Queen Louise's example encourages me as much as anything to take up the practice," mused Her Majesty, adding, with spirit: "but all that notwithstanding, I cannot bear the idea of gyrating round under the vulgar eye of hired attendants and servants. And another thing, Countess, when you hear me order the Court-marshal to fetch a dancer, please see to it that the doors leading into the adjoining apartments are closed, the lackeys remaining on the outside. I will not take a step until told, by a motion of your head, that all is attended to."

These all-highest wishes were carried out at the *soirée* in every particular, and at the close of the entertainment I no longer wondered at the purport of it all. Dancing, I fancy, is a natural gift capable of improvement; its different steps may be laboriously acquired, may even become a matter of memorizing, but unless there be talent at the bottom of it, the performance will certainly prove lame and devoid of grace.

Auguste Victoria was endowed with virtues more sturdy than nimble, and dancing is entirely out of her line; I dare say she feels it herself, though pride would no more allow her to admit this than her want of efficiency as an *equestrienne*, her pretensions being the outcome of the divine-appointment illusion, in which the Hohenzollerns believe as earnestly and which they accept as unreservedly as did any Shah or Grand Turk of the eighteenth century.

"By the Grace of God!"—these five, short words cover a vaster volume of sins against good sense than even charity! Here we have a sovereign lady who in all respects lives up to her representative duties as the consort of a powerful monarch, a woman of fine carriage

and fully conscious of her limitations in reference to affairs of state, yet imbued to such an extent with the notion that no one has a right to surpass her in feminine accomplishments as to let this fancy degenerate into a fixed idea. That she aims to be the smartest dresser, the most dignified and most gracious Queen, the most earnest worker in the cause of the Lutheran Church, are ambitions to be commended, but why also the best rider, the best dancer?

And the ludicrous part of it is, these august personages never dream that their affectations are transparent to the people about them. Thus I was told by the Emperor's Adjutant, Count Moltke, that when, on the occasion of a family excursion on horseback, he pointed out Prince William, praising him for his steady seat, Her Majesty said: "Ah, he inherited his horsemanship from me," a remark which caused the Emperor to sniff with impatience. Still, the truth of their mere humanness is often enough brought home to Kings and Queens.

Here are a couple of anecdotes to the point, both dating from Hubertusstock, whither their Majesties retire occasionally, attended by a small retinue consisting of two adjutants, a Court-marshal, lady-in-waiting, *Kammerherr*, and (this is the height of economy according to Court usages) one body-physician for both husband and wife.

In October, 1890, the Kaiserin accompanied the Emperor to an evening's rut-of-hart-shooting in a certain section of the forest, where the imperial Nimrod was so certain of making a big haul that he promised victims of his rifle on all sides.

The pair drove off with high expectations, the Kaiser in his new "hunt uniform," the Kaiserin wearing a gown of white cloth, silver-braided. But though conditions

seemed favorable—moon discreetly hidden behind clouds, wind blowing out of eminently correct quarters—some strange agency managed to frighten the stags away and out of reach as often as a fine pair of antlers came before William's barrel. The Kaiser allowed himself to be fooled in this fashion three long hours, until, finally, losing patience, he ordered the horses brought around. Getting into the carriage, he noticed an old gamekeeper, who stared at the Kaiserin in a rather disrespectful manner. "What is it, my man?" inquired the Emperor, who was beginning to suspect the cause of his ill-luck; "perhaps *you* can tell us why no confounded deer would come within range this evening."

"To be sure, Majesty" (the common folk of Germany always omit the "your"), "plain as daylight, that. Any fool knows that animals are skeered of white clothes."

The remark was so apropos that the Emperor overlooked its rudeness, and, turning to his wife with a mock bow, he exclaimed: "*Da hast Du die Proste-Mahlzeit*" ("That settles your bacon"), "'Dona.' In future I shall know better than to take a fashion-plate hunting with me."

The disgruntled couple arrived at the chalet after midnight, and I heard the Kaiser say he would take supper alone, meaning in company with his gentlemen only. Whether the Empress knew of this intention, I am unable to tell, but I do know that Her Majesty was in a fearful temper during our solitary meal in the boudoir, though the cook had provided her *mets favori*: potatoes in their jackets, and cold pork. Everything and everybody was in the wrong, and even the beloved Haake came in for her share of scolding.

"I forgot all about it, and, of course, none of my ladies knew enough to remind me that I possess not one garment fit for the chase." With these words the Kaiserin

wound up a long series of complaints, adding: "Let Lampe be commanded by telegraph to get up a full-skirted hunting-costume of the usual material, with green velvet trimmings, within forty-eight hours."

"But His Majesty being so particular as to color," I ventured to suggest, for the gamekeeper's blunt talk was already known at the castle, "would it not be better to send a sample of cloth to Frankfurt?"

"A good idea," cried our mistress, her face lighting up. "I tell you what you can do, Countess. After His Majesty has retired, get the valet to cut a sample from one of the turnings of his suit and enclose that to Lampe, sending a *Feldjäger* to the railway station with the letter. And be sure to use an envelope with the imprint: 'On His Majesty's Service.' That will carry it through by noon tomorrow."

The sample was secured in the manner directed. Lampe proved equal to the occasion, and Her Majesty's seasonable equipment arrived by the end of the week, giving such satisfaction that ever since it has formed an important part of the Empress's outing wardrobe. The costume is of greenish-gray material, tailor-made, with buttons cut from antlers. With it a small, round, green felt hat, adorned by a tuft of woodcock feathers and a simple green silk cord, is worn, while a tiny *couteau de chasse* hangs from Her Majesty's belt.

Another occasion where the purple-born was forcefully reminded of the equality of all things human arose during Court mourning for the late King of Württemberg, who died October 6, 1891. To escape tedious ceremonies in honor of that royal reprobate, their Majesties repaired to Hubertusstock shortly after the obsequies in Stuttgart, taking with them even less of a retinue than is customary at this retreat; and as the Kaiser hunted all day, there



was absolutely no one for whom she cared to dress up. Her Majesty seized the opportunity to wear some of her oldest mourning-dresses, and thus started out one morning in a simple gown devoid of all ornamentation, and wearing a Berlin hat to boot.

The royal lady intended to take a stroll in the forest all by herself, but, of course, no Queen is ever permitted to do so, her commands or entreaties notwithstanding; so I went ahead, while a lackey followed Her Majesty at a respectful distance.

The Empress had not been out more than a quarter of an hour when she met the letter-carrier, an old man whose leather bag is filled only on very rare occasions—at Christmas and during the Kaiser's occupancy of the castle. As it is a notorious fact that old Friedrich's head swells in proportion to the quantity of mail he handles, I felt some slight apprehension of impending trouble when I observed Her Majesty approach this pompous landlubber-martinet.

"Have you letters for Majesty?" asked the Kaiserin, imitating the vulgar mode of referring to the King.

"That way a fool may get caught, my girl," bristled up the veteran, "not a man like *me*" (he struck his breast so that the bronze medals decorating it began to dance about), "and, besides," he continued, with a leer in his eye, "those black gloves of yours might dirty the beautiful Kaiser-letters."

"Oh, my husband won't mind that; give me the letters."

"Your husband? Have a care, you dressed-up wench,—for you don't look smart enough for a *Köchin*" (cook),—"lest I report you for insult to Majesty."

At this juncture I thought it high time to make my presence known, and as the *Leibjäger*, too, arrived on the scene, the zealous postman quickly collapsed, and,

throwing himself on his knees, begged the sovereign lady's pardon. Of course, it was granted; it would have been ridiculous to take the old fool seriously. By Her Majesty's command, I gave him a mark that he might drown his terror in a bottle of *Schnapps*.



## CHAPTER VIII

Only quite recently have rumors of Her Majesty's ill-health crept into print, but the sovereign lady has been a sick woman since her *fausse couche* in June, 1895.

The Kaiserin was four months *enceinte* when the *Hohenfriedberg Tag*, that is, the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the battle of Hohenfriedberg (June 4, 1745), was first spoken of. It was her "own" regiment that won the famous victory, the "Baireuth Dragoons," now the Queen's Cuirassiers, or Pasewalker Cuirassiers, and Her Majesty at once decided to be the central figure of the festivities.

Grand Master of Ceremony Baron von Mirbach, advised of our august mistress's wish, set the ball rolling. First of all, Lieutenant-Colonel von Nymphenheim, commander of the regiment, was notified. An hour after receiving the message he was on his way to Potsdam, carrying an "all-submissive" petition from the regiment, which begged its most illustrious chief to confer upon the officers and troopers the "all-gracious" favor of attending the Pasewalk day of honor. Next there arrived for the Empress a high-stepping saddle-horse, sent by the director of the Trakheenen stud, and warranted "to be as docile as the proverbial lamb."

"You will have to ask one of your ladies to ride the chestnut for you during the summer," remarked the Kaiser at breakfast the morning after the blooded stallion had been received.

The Empress, who hates to have any one use anything belonging to her, replied, with a frown: "But I have not yet given up horseback exercise. Indeed, I thought of accompanying you to-day on a canter to Babelsberg, and gave orders that the new *Trakehner* be saddled."

The Emperor looked annoyed; but he detests scenes as much as any man, so he merely nodded assent. An hour later, the imperial couple was on the road to Babelsberg. The new horse proved all the director had claimed for him: he was beautiful, obedient to the slightest touch of the rein, and afraid of nothing. When their Majesties returned a few hours later, Auguste Victoria acted with unusual spirit. She danced about with the children, played billiards so badly as to let William beat her time and again, and, to cap the climax, appeared at luncheon in an extremely low-cut gown.

And what a jolly meal they had,—Kaiser, Kaiserin, and Lieutenant-Colonel von Nymphenheim! When the latter, taking leave late in the afternoon, bent low over the Empress's hand, he was heard to say: "*Au revoir, mon Générale, au revoir* in Pasewalk."

Grand-mistress Countess Brockdorff was dumfounded by the news. "Your Majesty will never be able to wear a tight uniform in June; remember, it will be your fifth month. I cannot permit it."

As she spoke, Her Excellency raised the *lorgnon* and looked her haughtiest. She is an imperious dame. Though having officially no voice in the household affairs that she makes her own, the Countess presumes to dictate to the Empress, as well as to terrorize the entire *entourage*. She is a fine-looking old woman, with an interesting head and a grand carriage. She has education and *esprit*, accomplishments in which Her Majesty is sadly lacking, but unfortunately uses them as a club to browbeat poor Auguste Victoria.

I have often trembled when I heard this woman address insolent or venomous remarks to our mistress,—trembled with a desire to throw the invectives back into her teeth. Even when submitting a proposition, she does it in arrogant tones. If the Empress mentions a watering-place where she wants to spend the summer with her children, and Countess Brockdorff does not approve of the choice, she runs the place down, though knowing, perhaps, nothing about its attractions or disadvantages. So there is often nothing left for Her Majesty but to pass the season at Wilhelmshöhe, which she loathes, as the park and gardens of King Jerome's old residence are subject to the glare of thousands of opera-glasses from morning till night.

Auguste Victoria is not an angel, but would be far less of a trial if it were not for the influence of the grand-mistress, who keeps her in a state of perpetual irritation, indulges her petulancy, and forever dissuades her from any generous notions that may enter her head. I once heard the Empress Frederick say: "If my daughter-in-law never saw her *Oberhofmeisterin* except in her *mantilla*, things would run much smoother at the Neues Palais."

The *mantilla*, a black lace shawl fastened to the back of the head and falling over the shoulders, is the grand-mistress's insignia, and is worn on public occasions, at audiences, state festivals, grand dinners, and similar functions which she is obliged to attend. Her further duties are to shield her mistress from coming into contact with persons unsuited to the royal presence, and to be her counsellor and friend generally; all other services she renders are gratuitous.

Under the Empresses Augusta and Frederick the *grandes mattresses* had establishments of their own; that, by itself, kept them from interfering in affairs of the Court. Her present Excellency, reckoning with the perennial low tide

in the exchequer, relinquished her claims for rent-moneys and asked to be lodged in the palace, and I need but mention that the Empress assigned to her the so-called Hohenzollern apartment, adjoining her own chambers in the Schloss—the same that was intended for the imperial children—to indicate Countess Brockdorff's influence. In the Neues Palais she has equally splendid chambers.

And to show her appreciation, this woman tyrannizes over the Kaiserin in such unprecedented fashion that our timid mistress is sometimes driven to a point when she thinks of complaining to the Emperor. "But what would be the consequence?" argues the sovereign lady. "The Kaiser detests Brockdorff, and would be glad to cashier her. Still, who knows whether her successor will be more agreeable?"

Only once did Auguste Victoria seriously contemplate the dismissal of Her Excellency; namely, when the latter dared to forbid her driving out with her children unattended. It happened in December, 1889, when the *Hoflager* was established at the Berlin Schloss. Brockdorff entered Her Majesty's rooms as the latter was about to descend.

"Myself and the children are going to pay a visit to our grandmother" (the Empress Augusta), said the Kaiserin.

"But I do not see Your Majesty's lady-in-waiting."

"I told *Mademoiselle* von Gersdorff she might stay at home. It is only a few steps to the Palais."

"Surely, Your Majesty has no intention of going unattended?" The grand-mistress had assumed her tone of authority.

"And why not, pray?"

"Because it would be the first time that a German Empress, or a Queen of Prussia either, does such a thing."

The Kaiserin's blood was up. "The first or the last time, *this* German Empress does as she pleases." And

Her Majesty swept out of the room, leaving the Countess glued to the spot in open-mouthed astonishment.

A truce was patched up only after days of sulking on Auguste Victoria's part and after the Countess had thoroughly humbled herself.

However, "the pitcher goes to the well until it breaks." In the Pasewalk matter it was shattered to pieces, and at the wrong moment too. The grand-mistress had no sooner pronounced her *non imprimatur* respecting the affair, when Auguste Victoria flared up: "The Kaiser gave his consent, *Gräfin*, and I shall regard your interference as impertinent."

There was poor Joachim, stunted, dull, excitable, his life and reason hanging by a thread, staring her in the face; but this time the loving mother had no thought of the *Mene tekel*. Swayed by the desire to show her independence of the dogmatical *grande maîtresse*, and, incidentally, yearning for new honors in the army, Her Majesty refused to listen to reason. During the next two weeks she divided her time between military exercises, riding, and the trying on of uniforms. A new *Waffenrock*, with extra broad inside turnings, was ordered, so the waist measure might be increased, if necessary, and our evenings were spent listening to or talking over lectures on the history of the "Baireuth Dragoons." For it had been decided that Her Majesty was to make a speech at the state banquet. In her capacity as chief of the regiment, she desired to formally welcome the war-lord and, at the same time, review at length the record of her troopers. Now, if Auguste Victoria lacks any particular accomplishment, it is that of ready address. Besides suffering from a constitutional inability to pronounce certain consonants, her articulation is faulty and her speech generally indistinct. She lisps, and can enunciate "p," "v," and "r"



only by supreme effort; ordinarily Her Majesty substitutes sounds which may pass for "b," "th," and "w" for these letters. Besides these physical, there are intellectual drawbacks. I have heard Her Majesty address the officers' wives of the Lehr und Wehr Battalion (at the annual commemoration festivities) two years in succession with the self-same words; namely: "I have all my children with me to-day," and once when, at the *Adler Schiessen* (shooting-match) of the First Guards, the crack-shots were presented to her, she announced, as if telling a great piece of news: "The Kaiser is in Russia, and I had to come alone with my children to this ceremony."

A really distressing scene of Her Majesty's helplessness I witnessed on January 17, 1889, the date of the annual coronation and decoration festival, the first held under William II.

A quarter of an hour before the beginning of the ceremonies, Chamberlain *Herr* von Ende and myself conducted Her Majesty to an apartment adjoining the state rooms, in order to present the honorary pages, who were to carry her train.

As may be imagined, the best-looking boys of noble birth in the kingdom had been selected for that office. There they stood, lithe, erect, blonde, and smiling in their graceful costumes of white satin, scarlet, silver, and laces.

"Cornet von Brauchitsch and Cornet *Freiherr* von Reibnitz," said the chamberlain.

The pages bowed low, and remained standing at an angle of forty-five degrees, as they had been told to unbend only when Her Majesty addressed them.

My mistress smiled, but said nothing.

"Cornet von Brauchitsch," commenced *Herr* von Ende again, "belongs to —," and a short history of the boy's family followed. Again Her Majesty smiled, but without

uttering a word. And "the Barons von Reibnitz," began the goldstick anew, and gave the Reibnitzes a splendid send-off. These reviews consumed five minutes at the very least; still Her Majesty kept silent.

"I submit that these are the pages who will have the honor to carry Your Majesty's train," I whispered.

*Enfin* the Empress understood that she had to do something. Nodding her head, she said quickly: "So you are going to carry my train!" The poor boys' heads shot up into the air, and, with faces as red as their coats, they stuttered: "At Your Imperial Majesty's orders," and again bowed low. Then, at a sign from *Herr* von Ende, they advanced to kiss the Kaiserin's hand, but Her Majesty, utterly confused, turned her back upon the boys, who now grasped hold of the loops of the *drap d'argent* mantle and followed the sovereign lady; for, contrary to all custom, the Empress led the way, and *Herr* von Ende succeeded in stepping before her only at the entrance to the next apartment.

And knowing Her Majesty's proneness to stage fright, *Herr* von Mirbach and Lieutenant-Colonel von Nymphenheim persuaded her to deliver an oration. Amid studies of all sorts—studies on military commands, on horsemanship, on bugle-calls, on expression and gesticulation—the day of days arrived. Two strong maids laced Her Majesty; it was cruel work to fasten her uniform.

I with others of the suite attended the review in a carriage, and you may imagine our feelings when we saw our mistress gambol about like a girl in the first bloom of youth with mind and body free from responsibilities. Barring intervals, Her Majesty galloped for a full hour that morning, and when, later on, I attended her at our temporary quarters, in the residence of Commander von Nymphenheim, who is a bachelor by the way, I thought a

miscarriage imminent. However, the pains subsided after a long rest, and a few strong doses of egg and cognac set my mistress right again.

The banquet lasted three hours,—three hours more the sovereign lady remained swathed in that grasp of iron, and during part of the time stood up, delivering her speech. First she trembled, and she lisped painfully all along, but nevertheless carried the oration to the point where it ended in the customary three "*hochs*" for the war-lord.

Baron von Mirbach tells a pretty story how the Empress composed that Pasewalk speech "all by herself," but, unfortunately, his tale is spoiled by the reflection that Auguste Victoria must have had the manuscript in hand these thirty or more years, for the tenor of her oration, so far as it dealt with Hohenfriedberg battle, ran somewhat in this fashion :

"Frederick had abolished the Saxons toward noon, and was pressing upon Prince Karl's" (the Austrian commander's) "naked left flank. At that moment, Lieutenant-General Gessler, under whom is the Dragoon Regiment Baireuth, dashed through, in two columns, sabre in hand, with extraordinary impetus and fire, into the belly of these jumbly Austrians, and slashed them to rags, twenty battalions of them, in an altogether unexampled manner. Took several thousand prisoners and such a haul of standards, kettle-drums, and insignia of honor as was never got before at one charge,—sixty-seven standards by the tale,—for the regiment wears, ever after, '67' upon its cartridge-box, and is allowed to beat the grenadier march."

A certain Thomas Carlyle published the above about 1861 or 1862, that is, at a period when Auguste Victoria was three years old.

We brought the Empress home in a precarious condition; she was thoroughly exhausted, unable to move a limb, and Dr. Zunker had little difficulty in persuading her that she must keep to her bed for an indefinite period.

However, ten days later she insisted upon getting up. A year before the Kaiser had promised that she should be the central figure (beside him) of the North Sea Canal opening, and she was not going to miss that. But while dressing to go to Hamburg, where, on July 19, the great banquet was to be held, our mistress collapsed, to rise again after three days. Then we all went to Kiel, taking lodgings at the Royal Schloss and attending some of the less fatiguing ceremonies, Her Majesty being escorted all the time by one of the body-physicians and stealthily keeping up her spirits by large doses of arsenic. Suddenly she took it into her head to go and live with the Kaiser on the yacht Hohenzollern. She endured the sea just twelve hours, then succumbed to the motion. The Empress had a miscarriage on deck, and was more dead than alive when she arrived at the Schloss. She now remained in bed four weeks. After that she was transported to the Neues Palais, was carried on a stretcher up-stairs and down-stairs, and to and from the carriage or car,—a confirmed invalid, as we feared. She did not get back the use of her limbs until the beginning of September.

But, although at the time Her Majesty's condition was a matter of general comment in the household, Grand-mistress Brockdorff wanted it understood that our mistress was merely suffering from a cold. Even the trained nurse, whom Professor Ohlshausen sent to watch that his instructions were faithfully carried out,—even this woman, who wore the customary nurse's dress and cap and slept in the Kaiserin's anteroom, figured as "seamstress" on the cooks' and the salary lists.

The Kiel *fausse couche* completed the wrecking of a constitution already impaired; but even before Her Majesty had begun to suffer from either her miscarriage or the drug-habit, she had impoverished her health by over-exertion.

After her first confinements, she used to keep in retirement five or six weeks, then the period was reduced to four, and, following Prince Joachim's birth, our sovereign lady persuaded the Emperor to return to the connubial couch after twenty days. Her love for William is pathetic. When he is away on his travels, she sleeps with his photograph on the pillow where his blonde head ought to rest, the full-length picture being stuck under the quilt up to the chin. When he is at home, she undergoes a thousand pains to make herself attractive according to his ever-varying notions. Because he experienced a sudden liking for slender women, my poor mistress sacrificed her bosoms, as already mentioned, and when the flesh-reducing process was fairly under way I found her in tears one morning. The Kaiser, she said amid sobs, had informed her "if he hated anything more than a fleshy woman, it was one as flat as a pancake."

Her Majesty frequently takes an hour to prepare for the night, only to find "Willie" snoring softly when she comes to bed. And, oh, the tears the imperial lady sheds over her hands which, though proportionate to her body, cannot be coaxed to come up to the Kaiser's standard of beauty. If those tears were collected, as was the saltish sympathy of paid weepers at the ancient Roman funerals, marry! they would fill quite as many bottles as are on Her Majesty's dresser.

I have had occasion to speak of Her Majesty's jealousy before this. When she is about to have a baby, that disposition becomes a perfect craze. When, in July, 1892, the *Hoflager* moved to the Marble Palace, where Princess Louise was born, the household had to get along without its official head, Baroness von Larisch, because the lady happens to have beautiful hands and arms and, on that account, is much admired by His Majesty. And a still

more petty thing: Auguste Victoria confiscated a photograph of Queen Emma of the Netherlands which stood on the Emperor's desk. The Queen-Regent is a most estimable lady, but it would be folly to call her pretty. Still, she has fine hands, and everybody and everything liable to inflame His Majesty's passion had to go. At about this time the Kaiserin ordered the seamstresses, who occupied a little room overlooking the court-yard, to be dislodged. She trembled lest her husband, who was about to return from his Northland journey, should see one of the women at the window.

If anything makes Her Majesty love little Louise more than her other children, it is the fact that the Emperor himself officiated at the babe's *accouchement*. That was quite an event even for so many-sided a personage as William, but, before describing it, I must call attention to the fact that, in obedience to Her Majesty's express commands, the lying-in chamber is selected only at the very last moment.

On September 13, at two o'clock in the morning, Her Majesty felt her hour had come. Still, she did not want to disturb the Emperor, who was sleeping at her side. After ringing the bell for Mrs. Macdonald, the English nurse, she crept out of bed and placed a screen so as to shield her husband from the eyes of persons entering the room. Mrs. Macdonald had been sitting up in her white *batiste* gown and lace hood, and responded in a few moments.

"Telephone for the doctors." (Dr. Zunker and Professor Ohlshausen were lodged at the Stadt Schloss.)

"But where will Your Majesty lie?" asked the nurse, after carrying out the command.

"I almost forgot about that,—in the balcony-room. The servants must go to work at once."

The balcony-room is the great *salon* of the Palais, and connects with the imperial bed-chamber *pro tempore* by folding-doors.

Presently the procession of maids and men-servants came rushing past the screen to turn the parlor into a *Wochenstube*. The big carpet was taken up, the floor swept, and covered with a thick linen cloth. All the silk hangings were removed, and others of *tulle* or cretonne put up, while couches and *fauteuils* of wicker-work replaced the gilded upholstered furniture. These preparations lasted a full hour. Meanwhile the Empress was growing worse, and Mrs. Macdonald awoke the Kaiser, who seemed not overpleased. However, he wrapped his pajamas about him, and sat down in a chair, while two lackeys unshackled their Majesties' joined brass bedsteads, just vacated, and removed the big upper mattress that covered both. The beds being separated, they were remade, and one had already been rolled into the *salon* (while in *Wochen* Her Majesty changes her couch daily), when Auguste Victoria let herself fall upon the other.

"Send away those men!" cried Mrs. Macdonald, looking at the Kaiser, and added: "now push the bed into the *salon*, quick, while I hold Her Majesty's hand."

William, in his pajamas, but not lacking in dignity, obeyed the nurse like a recruit. He worked like a Trojan as he trundled the heavy bed before him, but when its front legs reached the threshold, one of them caught in a rent of the parquet; there was a jerk, then a squeal: the little stranger had arrived.

According to Countess Eulenburg, the Kaiser told a tableful of guests in Liebenberg, during his visit in the winter of 1895, that his wife, immediately after giving birth, dons her corsets and keeps them on during the entire period of lying-in. Whether His Majesty is correctly

1. *Chrysomelids* 7. 1911.  
2. *Chrysomelids* 8. 1912.



**KAISER WILLIAM IN HIS BATHROBE**

**Photo by Her Majesty the Empress**





informed or not, I cannot say. If he is, the circumstance might properly be classed with others that have combined to undermine Her Majesty's health. Talking about her sister, the Princess Frederick Leopold, after the latter had given birth to her first child, my mistress said: "I do hope Louise will follow my advice with respect to her figure; it would be awful to see her come out of this without *Taille*" (waist); but as to the nature of her advice, the Kaiserin volunteered no information.

In royal households *accouchements* are not delicately regarded; the pregnancies of a Queen or of the Princesses concerning the weal or woe of the dynasty, are discussed by officials with disgusting freedom. No wonder the distinguished patients themselves become emboldened. In another chapter I have mentioned Her Majesty's blunt speech with a couple of men-servants on matters concerning her lying-in. That was not an uncommon incident. Lackeys being regarded as mere automatons, a German Queen would as soon order a man to assist her with her toilet as to help her mount her horse.

Auguste Victoria dines with her gentlemen and numerous guests sometimes until the very day she is brought to bed. When the Princess Frederick Leopold was about to be confined in the Potsdam Stadt Schloss, the Kaiserin, upon her arrival from Berlin, personally ordered a young lieutenant to take his stand opposite a certain window from where the birth would be signalled to him the moment it took place. "At this sign," said Her Majesty, "you will stop the soldiers' exercises for the rest of the day, as Her Royal Highness will be in want of absolute quiet after she gets through."

The lieutenant had to wait three hours. You can imagine the remarks of his colleagues and the quiet grins of the soldiers. They call him *Hebamme* to this day.

Once when the Glücksburgs were on a visit at the Berlin Schloss, I heard the Empress roundly abuse her *Kammerdiener* for compelling her sister Calma and the Duke to sleep in two separate beds.

"But," said Herr Lück, "we have no double beds at the Schloss."

"In that case you should have sent to Potsdam for one. You are long enough in the service to know that we Holsteins like to cuddle up to our husbands."

"The Duchess," continued Her Majesty, addressing me, "complains that she did not get warm all night. Please tell Madame von Larisch that a double bed must be set up in their Highnesses' apartments at once."

This happened on a Sunday, and the bed was actually brought from Potsdam by one of the evening trains, Sabbath or no Sabbath.

In August, 1893, when their Majesties were at the manœuvres in Rhineland, the Empress's shoulder was hurt by a shutter falling from a house in Coblenz the moment her carriage passed by. The injury was slight, and when the acting body-physician, Dr. Ernesti, made a professional call next morning, while Her Majesty was at her toilet, she told her *Kammerdiener*: "Notify the doctor that his services are not needed. My shoulder and breast are blue, but otherwise I am all right."

It passes my comprehension how Her Majesty reconciles this license of speech to her excessive prudery in other respects.

When we go to live at a castle not ordinarily used by the Court, the Empress always makes it a point to inspect the servants' quarters, to see whether the maids are lodged far enough from the men; but when, some time ago, one of her chamber-women was about to marry, she gave the poor girl such a glowing description of the joys

awaiting her, that Sophie came from the room as red as a lobster.

Miss Atkinson, the English governess, was dismissed for promenading in the park of the Neues Palais with a male colleague of hers, *Herr Kessler*, the teacher of the elder boys, and an unmarried man at that, and about the same time the Empress addressed a letter to General Vogel von Falckenstein, commander of the Fifth Division, complaining of the cold reserve which his officers maintained toward the ladies at balls and on similar occasions. "The Austrian officers," wrote Her Majesty, "appear to be more gallant than our gentlemen."

"They are," said the Princess of Meiningen when she heard of the letter: "I had scarcely spoken twenty words to an Austrian officer, a Prince of a once sovereign house, whom I met in Vienna, when he said: 'Your Royal Highness has the most exquisite bosoms in the room, and I have examined them all.'"

Such a remark is considered devilish polite in Vienna, and in perfect good taste, besides.

With respect to the letter, I should add that its authorship belongs by right to Countess Keller and *Fräulein* von Gersdorff, which ladies have probably good grounds for complaints. I doubt, however, that they would fare better in Austria, or anywhere outside of Kamtchatka. One of the two women wrote the note to Falckenstein and persuaded Her Majesty to copy and pass it off as her own, in order to give it more weight. As for the Empress, she is almost as bad a writer as a speaker. Shortly after the death of the late King Louis of Portugal, the *Fürstin* von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, his late Majesty's sister, bitterly complained of the letter of condolence my mistress had written her. "The Empress bestowed scarcely twenty words on my poor brother," said Her Royal Highness,

"but filled three or four pages with a description of her trip to Greece, that appeared to have been taken from some guide-book."

The latter surmise is probably correct. *Büdecker* is one of Her Majesty's closest friends; she usually keeps one or two of the red volumes on her writing-desk and constantly makes extracts from them to assist memory. Before she entered upon her first trip to Rome, the chamber-women found in her bed, on two successive mornings, slips of paper inscribed:

"Rom liegt an *die* Tiber."

Auguste Victoria was undoubtedly desirous of impressing this momentous fact upon her mind, and as for using the German preposition with the nominative, instead of the dative, it's but a venial sin.

The *Fürstin* misconstrued, however, Her Majesty's motives in mentioning King Louis's death but briefly. There was no want of sympathy on the Kaiserin's part, I am sure. As to ideas and expressions, even an Empress cannot always command them.

The Grand Duchess of Sachsen, too, complained that Her Majesty wrote her a meaningless letter after she had been made welcome in Weimar.

I am afraid these ladies forget that the Duke of Schleswig scarcely had the means to give his children a good education. Auguste Victoria is wanting in the most ordinary knowledge to quite an incredible extent. Thus she recently directed that a basin of cold water be placed in His Majesty's study, in order that "the liquid, by evaporation, absorb the foul air." She had read something about purifying air by water without comprehending it. When the Emperor had gone out in the evening, Her Majesty and Countess Keller went to the study to see

whether the scheme had worked. The basin was found to be half empty, and the Kaiserin, looking around with an air of triumph, exclaimed: "Ah, ah, report this to Countess Brockdorff, my dear. Her Excellency was inclined to doubt me when I told her of my theory. You see the water is gone, and the air much better in consequence."

Of course, the complacent Keller, like an Omrah of the Great Mogul, lifted up her hands, and cried: "Wonder, wonder, wonder!" but it is a fact that the Kaiser's *Teckels* lapped the water out of the basin.





## CHAPTER IX

The Empress has had a friend ; she has none now. Or one may say she has had two : Countess Waldersee and Pastor Stoecker. The latter is a dead man, politically and socially ; the Emperor himself arranged his funeral, and it was not one of the first class, like Bismarck's or the Chief of Staff's, either.

The former Mary Esther Lee, of New York, has been variously designated in the public prints as a person of most extraordinary influence with their Majesties,—as a sort of Egeria, appointed to instruct the modern Numa not only with regard to the forms of worship to be introduced, but also in general government matters. If the Kaiser bounced Bismarck to rid himself of somebody who had grown to love power and to think himself indispensable, why should he hesitate to drop the Waldersees, man and wife—or perhaps I should say *wife* and man, for Mary Esther is the moving spirit of that house—why, I ask, should he scruple to cashier these persons as soon as public opinion endowed them with an importance well-nigh overshadowing the throne ?

“The Moor has done his duty : the Moor may go !” There was no Bismarck to be held in check by fear of the ever-ready successor in 1891 ; *except* the all-powerful Chief of Staff ! As to his Countess,—having ceased to be a necessity to Auguste Victoria,—there was no reason for temporizing on her account.

Princess William that was had been in Her Excellency's leading-strings, as stated in preceding chapters; out of the gawky girl-despite-birth, the grand-dame-without-birth had made a lady capable of carrying her own weight and holding her tongue—when she had nothing to say. *Madame la Maréchale* also taught her charge—though the insincere aspects of it were foreign to her own mind—that religion, properly hung to the wind, makes an excellent cloak for insignificance. During the first year after Auguste Victoria's ascension to the throne, Countess Waldersee proved useful, too; on public occasions and in society she was an infallible counsellor, and a much less imperious one than Countess Brockdorff. Besides, when the latter whispered to her newly-made Majesty, everybody suspected her of giving advice, while Madame von Waldersee's tips passed for mere pleasantries.

But to be forever reminded of debts of gratitude is so tiresome. I believe no one at Court regarded the removal of the Waldersees to Altona with pleasanter anticipations than my mistress did. I attended the last audience Her Majesty granted the Countess. It was painfully formal; probably both women desired it so, each for reasons of her own. To give it a friendly turn, the Kaiserin asked Her Excellency, in the end, for her photograph "as a souvenir of their long acquaintance."

This latter fact by itself should suffice as a denial of the numberless stories about the intimacy alleged to have existed between my mistress and the General's wife. Intimacy between a Royal Schleswig and the daughter of David Lee, of the United States! Intimacy between the German Empress, Queen of Prussia, and the wife of Eléonore Hoffmeyer's descendant! The persons who first gave utterance to that Canterbury tale must have gathered their ideas of Her Majesty's character from the tittle-tattle of

silly women who act as "barkers" at our charity bazaars. At one of these, held at the War Ministry, I believe, I first heard Countess Waldersee spoken of as the "Kaiserin's aunt," a title probably invented for no other purpose than to please Her Excellency's own friends. I carried it home with me, and their Majesties adopted it, but not in a friendly spirit. When the Kaiser alludes to the *Volkschulgesetz*, that has failed, or similar measures, in conversation with his wife, he sometimes says "thy aunt" or "thy uncle;" when the Kaiserin speaks of Pastor Stoecker nowadays, maybe she calls him "my aunt's friend" or "my uncle's political bedfellow." That the Kaiser never regarded Countess Waldersee as an equal or a favorite is evident from the fuss he made when he granted Her Excellency permission to wear the Queen Olga decoration, given her by the King of Württemberg. If he had raised her and her husband to the princely dignity, he could not have shouted louder than he did about this act of cheap courtesy.

Count and Countess Waldersee attended most of the Court ceremonies held at the beginning of the present reign, and Her Ladyship's fine laces and diamonds were much admired then; but as soon as Court mourning was over and the noisome *fêtes* at the Schloss and palace were inaugurated, she commenced sending her "regrets," pretending to be in failing health. That Her Excellency was ever received *en famille*, or even without running the gauntlet of notification to and from the Court-marshal or grand-mistress, etc., is an invention pure and simple. It is true, however, that Prince and Princess William often visited at the General Staff building during the last year of the old Kaiser's illness, yet their calls were not of a social nature. About that time, William had religion on the brain, and the pious Countess was just the woman to encourage such a craze.

If the widow of Prince Noer had remained single, the Kaiserin might have continued to regard her as a friend and relative even after her elevation to the throne, but as Countess Waldersee—never. Are not the Waldersees illegitimate, the offspring of a Duke of Anhalt and an adulterous woman, Frau Neitschütz, *née* Hoffmeyer, who, to make matters worse, disregarded the maxim *le divorce est le sacrement de l'adultère* into the bargain? I have heard Her Majesty more than once express strong opinions on this subject: a lady, honored by the hand of an Augustenburger, throwing herself away on a social nobody, whose grandfather received a surname only when twenty years old! This without prejudice to the present incumbent of the title, of course. Her Majesty likes Count Waldersee as far as she likes anybody outside of her husband, her children and herself, and William likes and fears him at the same time.

Of the ladies and gentlemen of the service, only one, *Herr* von der Knesebeck, Vice-Grand-master of Ceremonies, enjoys his mistress's confidence and friendship. After what has been said of Countess Brockdorff, I need hardly mention that this lady is not a favorite. Dames of the Court *Mademoiselle* von Gersdorff and *Comtesse* Keller are old maids with the faults of their class; that is especially true with regard to the latter, called "*Speck-Mathilde*" on account of her oft-professed axiom, that anything (*Speck*, *i.e.*, bacon and the like) is good enough for people who are not Empresses or *filles d'honneur*. Countess Keller is buyer-in-ordinary to Her Majesty, and it is this lady who selects for the house-servants those gorgeous presents—cotton petticoats, wash-rags, glass vases, and knitted gloves—that grace the palace Christmas-trees. It cannot be denied, though, that she is a thorough courtier. Any impossible thing that Her Majesty may order,

Countess Keller enthusiastically approves of. "*Speck-Mathilde* would rather bite off her tongue than inform Her Majesty that a square peg will not fit into a round hole," says Princess Frederick Leopold, and I believe she would.

Clara von Gersdorff also rejoices in a sobriquet. Old and young in the palace speak of her as *Rühr-Clara* (Sentimental Clara), or *Der süsse Dusel* (Sweet Dizzy). The first nickname has reference to her loud, long-drawn-out mode of speech. If, on leaving her room, she gives orders to her maid through the open door, her voice can be heard all over the staircase. The other *epitheton* is supposed to describe her character, which forever fluctuates between high-soaring idealism and the pettiest of mundane nothingnesses. She is blonde, carries her forty years well, has a pale, broad face, square shoulders, and walks as if shod with cuirassier boots.

When I see my mistress in such hands as Keller's and Gersdorff's, I am always reminded of what Walpole wrote about Christian VII of Denmark: "He is a genteel enough figure, but surrounded by a pack of — whose interest it is to make him one if they can." Auguste Victoria might have turned out an altogether different woman from what she is, had she not fallen in with narrow-minded, paltry characters the moment she entered upon her new sphere of life in Berlin.

The Kaiser hates Gersdorff more than the grand-mistress,—hates and maltreats her with sarcastic references to her figure,—for no other outward reason, apparently, than because her large, red, and ugly hands offend him.

If Countess Bertha von Bassewitz were not twenty-three and pretty, she might win Her Majesty's love, for she is an agreeable, talented, and high-minded young woman whom everybody likes.

Baron Mirbach and Count Keller, the Grand-master and *Kammerherr*, respectively, are stereotyped Prussian officials, cringing before their mistress, and intolerably abusive to all of lesser rank than their own. *Herr* von Mirbach tries to make himself indispensable by catering to Her Majesty's church-building schemes; but while acknowledging the Baron's talents as a business manager, the august lady is far from liking him as a man.

Both Keller and Mirbach hate the amiable Bodo Knesebeck, whom the Empress Frederick once called "the only gentleman at her son's Court," but as he is a most deserving man, besides being a favorite, their intermittent intrigues are of little moment. Before entering upon the service of Auguste Victoria, Baron Knesebeck was the confidant of the old Empress Augusta, who left him quite a sum of money; he is to-day the only non-relative of the royal house who participates in the occasional family dinners. *Herr* von Mirbach and the House-marshals must order and arrange these affairs, but have to withdraw and make room for their subaltern as soon as the dinner-hour strikes, or "as soon as they have counted spoons and covers," as they say in the palace. This expression dates, so far as it refers to spoons, from Count Moltke's ninetieth birthday (October 26, 1890), when the King of Saxony had to go without soup at the state banquet because he found no spoon at his place, and because it was against etiquette either to ask whether he was not hungry or to send a footman to get the missing article. And when, after the spring parade of 1896, some Bavarian officers were to be entertained in the White Hall, it was discovered that no seats had been provided for them. House-marshal Baron von Egloffstein had ordered covers for all the Prussians, but the South German allies had been entirely forgotten. The two *faux pas* nearly cost Egloffstein his position.

But to return to *Herr* von der Knesebeck. He spends every other week in Her Majesty's service, and is liberal and kind-hearted. Where his colleagues, Mirbach, Keller, Lyncker, and Eulenburg, discredit the Court by their nig-gardness, he exhibits the *savoir-vivre* of the old regime. So he gave an organ-grinder, whom Her Majesty, during her stay in Sassnitz, in the summer of 1892, had ordered to play a whole morning for the children's benefit, twenty marks. Thereupon—that is, when the bills were audited in Berlin—cries of terror, amazement, and indignation.

"A double gold crown to a miserable Dago!" Baron Mirbach and Count Eulenburg pronounced such recklessness unprecedented, and said they did not know what the Minister of the royal house would do about it. "Really, we cannot pass this bill without special authorization."

"If that is so," said *Herr* von der Knesebeck, coolly, "I herewith deposit twenty marks to remain in Your Excellencies' hands while the matter is in abeyance. Damn a man who is not willing to risk a trifle to give the Queen's children a good time!"

The case is still in abeyance.

So great is Her Majesty's confidence in *Herr* von der Knesebeck, that, if at all possible, she submits to him every little matter concerning her public conduct, either verbally or in writing. In the course of the year, Empress and chamberlain exchange hundreds of letters, some of the Kaiserin's being five and six pages long.

Bodo Knesebeck saved the Empress from making herself ridiculous, and from seriously compromising her husband and the government, during the Berlin riots of February, 1892. Incidentally the chamberlain saved our mistress from her lord's lasting displeasure on that occasion, which probably counts more with her than anything else. For weeks we had prepared for the great carnival ball of



February 25, when the invited gentlemen were to appear for the first time in English Court-dress, an event William looked forward to no less eagerly than a girl does to her début in long frocks. For the ball, the late King's favorite, *première ballerina* Marie Koebisch-Wolden, had arranged a gorgeous revival of that most graceful dance, *menuet à la reine*, which was to be tripped before the throne when the evening's festivities were at their height. My mistress meant to surpass all her previous efforts in the matter of personal adornment.

At last the festive day had come. Early in the morning the entire stock of crown-jewels, all excepting the crown itself, were brought to the royal dressing-room, and Her Majesty, Countess Brockdorff, and *Frau* von Haake spent hours making and remaking new combinations of the stones and ornaments, most of which can be put to various uses, as pins, buttons, buckles, brooches, etc. Then, all of a sudden, the cry ran through the Schloss's chambers: "Berlin is in revolt!"

"There will be no *menuet*, rather a *Carmagnole*," lamented the anxious; "instead of beribboned and belaced silk coats, the blouse; in place of honeyed words and pretty toy swords, 'pipe in cheek, loaded canes on thigh,' as in the days when they sang '*Vive le son du canon*.'"

Baron Mirbach sent me to my mistress to prepare her for noisy scenes in the neighborhood of the Schloss. I found the Empress in the room facing the great fountain, running excitedly from one window to the other. In the square below, people were assembling in groups, talking and gesticulating.

I delivered the message and, of my own accord, added: "His Majesty will not drive out this morning."

"And if he loves me, he will remain, he *must* remain with us until this awful revolution is quelled."

"I entreat Your Majesty to be calm," I made bold to say, as Countess Brockdorff kept silent; "according to the papers, these people want bread and want work; they have no thought of violence. Besides," I said, "*Herr von Richt-hofen* has sent the entire police reserves to the *Schloss*. There are fifty men at each entrance, and more guarding the cellar-openings and the waterside. All the corridors are patrolled, and a dozen men are on the lookout on the roof."

"The roof!" cried the Empress, as if swayed by a new fear. "Oh, *Gräfin*" (this to Countess Brockdorff), "they may throw bombs on the roof and destroy us all! I must go to see the Kaiser at once."

Second breakfast commenced half an hour earlier than usual, and we hurried through its four courses, following their Majesties' example. The Kaiserin's eyes were red with crying, and some minutes before dessert the children came in, a thing that does not happen more than once or twice a year. His Majesty loves his little ones in his own way; that is, he likes to keep them at a distance. If brought into personal contact with the youngsters, his sense of decorum revolts, and he does not know what to do with them, except to criticise their dress or military demeanor.

"I am not going on a journey," he said, and, looking at the Crown Prince, added: "You and your brothers have not come to say good-bye?" The Empress bowed her head and whispered something while the Kaiser leaned over the table, holding his hand to his ear.

"*Dummes Zeug*," he said, loud enough for all to hear, and pushed back his chair; "I am riding out as I do every day in the year; there is no use making a scene, 'Dona'!" He kissed some of the children, fondled the heads of the younger ones, and, drawing the Empress's arm through his own, walked out, preceded by the House-marshal and his adjutants.

When, a quarter of an hour later, the Empress came from his room, she declared: "Thank God, the Kaiser will take his pistols along, one in the right pocket of his trousers, and one in his coat pocket." Then Her Majesty led the way to the state apartments, where we took our stand at the windows of the Knights' Hall, to see William ride from Portal V a few minutes later.

As he passed, His Majesty looked up, and the Empress followed him along the front of the Schloss through the Black Eagle chamber, the Red Velvet chamber, and the old chapel. As we crossed over to the windows of the picture-gallery, he waved his hand for the last time, and we saw him spur his horse into a quick trot. Only then it was observed that the Emperor was without his ordinary escort of grooms and gendarmes. Merely Adjutant von Moltke and one other military gentleman accompanied him. The Kaiserin was beside herself. "He will be killed, I know he will be killed, and myself and the children will come next. Let us flee from this room, in front of which, as the Kaiser says, kingship was put to the greatest indignities."<sup>1</sup>

Her Majesty ran to her own apartment, and through the speaking-tube ordered that all her children be brought down at once. She was pale and was trembling. Seeing the jewels, where they had been left in the morning, she began to hastily replace them in the boxes. "Haake," she said, "shall arrange all my own jewelry in like manner; everything must be packed at once."

"But to-night's ball?" suggested Countess Keller.

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<sup>1</sup> Standing on the balcony of the Schloss in March, 1848, Frederick William IV was ordered by the revolting populace to salute the citizens, killed by the soldiery the day before, by taking off his hat, and complied with the request.



**NEUES PALAIS, POTSDAM**

**The Kaiser's residence after the death of his father**





"There will be no festival," said the royal lady, resignedly, "or a very different one from that promised; namely, when the Kaiser is saved, and joins myself and the children at the Neues Palais."

Countess Keller, in her usual complacent fashion, at once acquiesced. "I beseech Your Majesty not to go without me," she shrieked, hysterically. "I will protect and, if need be, die for my beloved Empress."

Meanwhile, the rioting had been begun in earnest on the *Schloss Platz* and in the neighborhood of the *Lustgarten*. The strikers and out-of-works, who had willingly made room for the Emperor when he passed by them—who had even doffed their hats and caps at the royal radiance—suddenly recollected their self-imposed mission and began to offer trouble to the police. They refused to move on, and threatened the horses of the mounted *Schutzleute* with violence unless they kept off their toes. As yet, they had not worked themselves up to a state of excitement which menaced the troopers themselves. The rears of the backing steeds formed the base of popular assault.

"See there, there!" cried the Empress, "I told you this was a revolution. The crowds are getting thicker and thicker; they will overthrow the police and then attack the palace. And the Kaiser is away. We must go at once. Our only safety lies in flight."

"Fetch Knesebeck," I whispered to *Mademoiselle von Gersdorff*; "he alone can set our mistress right. We shall all be disgraced if this mad plan is carried out. Be quick, before that toad-eating Keller drives the Kaiserin thoroughly crazy."

*Herr von der Knesebeck* appeared after a little while, suave and smiling as usual. He did not exasperate Her Majesty by underrating the danger. He pointed out to her that the *Schloss* was the safest place for herself, her



children, and her jewels. "There are about five hundred men, soldiers, *Schutzleute*, and detectives inside these walls," he argued, "and if an attack were made, fifty thousand others will be on the outside before they begin to batter down the gates, and the gates are the strongest in the Empire. Now let us assume that Your Majesty would choose to leave for Potsdam. At least four carriages would be needed to carry Your Majesty, the Princes, and the *entourage* to the station. Then there is the escort. Your Majesty would not like to brave the mob alone, and the royal livery, re-enforced by bayonets or sabres, might exasperate the people. But let us say, for argument's sake, that we get out of Berlin without trouble. If this is a revolution, as Your Majesty thinks, it will not be confined to the capital. It will follow us to Potsdam; and the Neues Palais is to the Schloss what Heligoland is to Gibraltar."

"In Potsdam we have the subterranean exit,"<sup>1</sup> faltered out Her Majesty.

"True, and if Your Majesty decides to use it, at any time, you will find yourself among your soldiers," said *Herr* von der Knesebeck impressively,—“among your soldiers there as you are under their protection here.

"And now," concluded the chamberlain, with a little fib, "I see Her Excellency is making signs; matters of toilet demand immediate attention, I dare say." (*With a bow*) "If Your Majesty has anything to communicate to the Kaiser, who, I understand, is to come back by three o'clock, I am at Your Majesty's commands."

"Then you think we are really safe?"

"Safe?" laughed *Herr* von der Knesebeck,—“Your Majesty is pleased to joke. Would the Kaiser leave you

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<sup>1</sup> This is a conduit leading from the basement of the Neues Palais to the barracks of the Lehr und Wehr Battalion opposite.

and the Princes if there was a shadow of danger within ten thousand miles?"

Brockdorff, Keller, Gersdorff, Haake, and myself all took up this cue and dwelt upon it and enlarged upon it, and before Her Majesty could work herself up into another fit of fright the maids had taken her in hand to begin preparations for the night's ball. When the Kaiser returned, he went at once to the Empress to tell of his adventures with the mob: how he had "cowed the ugliest of the rioters by a single look;" there had been no hostile demonstrations "where *he* showed himself;" in some places he had even been cheered. "And" (here His Majesty had a good laugh) "in the *Thiergarten* half a dozen fellows tried to thrust petitions into my hand. Some of them I let run beside me for a good quarter of an hour, and not till they were well-nigh exhausted did I order Moltke to take their papers. Among others, one exceedingly fat person engaged in this exercise, and I thought he would expire as he tried to keep pace with Extase" (William's favorite horse).

The rest of the evening passed in preparations for the ball, and the feast came off in a blaze of glory. We had our *menuet à la reine*, while the Berliners danced the *Carmagnole* to the tune of crashing show-windows and demolished doors, as our guests reported under their breath, when out of ear-shot of their Majesties and the high officials. "I came in a second-class *Droschke*, and the crowd allowed me to pass without a murmur," said one ministerial councillor, "but my old Excellency had to ask a *Schutzmann* to take the place of his groom at the *Puppenbrücke*, and the man of the law was obliged to use his weapon freely to enforce the right of way."

"I hope there was no blood spilled," said I.

"Mortal wounds were not dealt. The *Schutzleute* had orders to use the flats of their swords only, but there will be many sore heads, nevertheless, to-morrow. Besides, all the police stations are filled with prisoners, and about fifty stores—bakery and provision stores, most of them—have been sacked."

The situation continued semi-threatening for two days longer, for the newspaper accounts of the dazzling Court *fete* had been red rags to the mob. From early morn till night angry masses collected about the castle, shouting and throwing their arms about, and persons leaving the Schloss on foot were sure to be greeted and followed by derisive grunts. Once or twice gentlemen coming from Court were jostled by the crowd, whereupon the Emperor, who was an interested witness of the scenes, telephoned to *Herr* von Richthofen to have the *Lustgarten*, the streets, and the three bridges leading to the castle cleared. In the charges by the mounted policemen and by *Schutzleute*, fifty or sixty persons received sabre cuts and others were ridden down, the Kaiser standing at the balcony window that saw his granduncle's submission to mob law, and viewing the bloody sallies with grim satisfaction.

On February 27 the children clamored loudly for an outing. They had been locked in the house for three days, and confinement was telling on the little ones. But Her Majesty would not hear of the proposed carriage ride. Only after Major von Falkenhayn had patrolled the streets in citizen's dress to ascertain the popular animus, and reported that the riotous movement had entirely subsided, were the children sent to the *Thiergarten* in an old carriage, driven by a man in every-day clothes and preceded by ditto grooms on horseback, who were to keep well ahead and communicate with the police along the route. The police, by the way, had played a distinguished part in the

Emperor's outing on the first day of the riot, too. Several hours before His Majesty rode from Portal V, a thorough *Sicherheitsdienst* had been arranged along the line William intended to travel: *Schutzleute* in uniform or civilian dress walked among the rioters, listening to their talk and occasionally packing off an over-loud individual, while others kept the road open and the people moving. Besides, a mounted *Schutzmann* was posted on every street-corner to watch the houses and passers-by. And this line of vigilance extended over all parts of the *Thiergarten*, which, moreover, was traversed by police and detectives in cabs and on fleet horses galloping up and down the bridle-path like private gentlemen. The royal *Marshall* had sent a hundred grooms to the park to watch over the master and act as *galopins* for the police lieutenants and captains stationed at different points. The garrison was confined in the barracks,—“and, moreover,” said Baron Richthofen, to whom I am obliged for these minute statements, which I was to repeat to Her Majesty, “and, moreover, the Kaiser had his two six-shooters. But, believe me,” added the chief of police, “there was no need whatever of His Majesty's bellicose preparations. If there had been the slightest apprehension of violence, the Kaiser would never have been allowed outside of the Schloss.”

“But if he had insisted? He has an iron will.”

“Ah,” said the Baron, “there are moments in a sovereign's life when his will is of no more account than that of a raw recruit.”

During all these days Her Majesty was in such fear and excitement that even *Herr* von der Kneesebeck could not persuade her to abandon the idea of flight altogether. On the morning of the twenty-sixth the Empress had her jewels packed anew,—officials had taken charge of the crown-jewels after the ball,—and her belongings were kept in a

state of preparedness for sudden removal throughout the week.

To return to the subject of Her Majesty's *intimes*. Among the persons of the household, as pointed out, *Herr* von der Knesebeck is the only one in whom the Kaiserin places implicit confidence, but at the same time he is not of "sufficient birth" or rank to be regarded as other than a faithful servant. For a *Kammerherr* in actual service, whatever his qualifications of heart and head are, is little short of a titled flunky. When he has *du jour*, he must be at his mistress's beck and call the same as the *Kammerdiener*. If Her Majesty drives out, he follows in a second carriage, or, when the children are taken along, in the fourth; if she visits people, he has to wait at the door of the antechamber; if she goes to bazaars or the theatre, he trots in front of her or behind her, disbursing her alms, buying her tickets, and seeing that her chair is in the right place; in short, a *Kammerherr* is all but a lackey in name, the only difference being that he wears gold buttons on his coat, instead of silver lace, and carries around umbrellas, opera-glasses, and muffs, instead of wraps and footstools. To a *Kammerherr*, the Empress does not speak so broadly about being brought to bed as to a *Kammerdiener*, but she would as soon allow a *valet de chambre* to smoke in her presence as treat a chamberlain on a footing of equality. And royal valets, mind you, have been regarded with suspicion ever since Louis XV sent half a dozen of them to the Bastille, when, by accident, he overheard a fellow whisper: "Come and let's play with the Duchess of Burgundy." Her Royal Highness was that *Dauphine* who considered it exquisite fun to have her servants drag her along by her legs in the gardens of Versailles during moonless evenings.

Among non-royal women, Her Majesty at one time looked upon Princess George Radziwill and Countess Goertz with

feelings akin to friendship. As before stated, both are French women. The first, *née* Marie Branicki, is the wife of a former lieutenant of the *Garde du Corps*, who, during a long residence in Potsdam and Berlin, succeeded in accumulating a few million marks of debts. Now the couple hold forth on Prince Anton Radziwill's Polish domains, where dirt is wedded to *Fusel*, and where, on an income of ten thousand marks per year, they can live like fighting-cocks. Two things drew Auguste Victoria to Princess George. Her Grace was as capable of throwing away money as the Royal Highness and Majesty, and both excelled for a time in the matter of bringing forth a child year by year. The Kaiserin married two years before Countess Marie did, in 1881, had a child in 1882 and one in 1883, 1884, 1887, 1888, 1890, and 1892. *Comtesse* de Branicki married in 1883 and had children in 1884, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1889, and 1894,—four boys and two girls. In some instances they followed each other at intervals of ten months. Countess Goertz, too, would come up to Napoleon's sarcastic estimate of "woman's greatness." Married in February, 1876, she had a child in January, 1877, and before the year was up was delivered of number two. With her other four children she allowed herself more time.

Since the Radziwills moved from Berlin, Princess Marie's name has never been mentioned at the Palais, and the relations between the Empress and Countess Goertz are strained ever since the Kaiser declared Her *Erlaucht* (Illustrious Ladyship) an eminently beautiful woman.

Jealousy on the one hand and egotism re-enforced by pride on the other, prevent friendly relations between Her Majesty and her relatives on the Kaiser's side. I have already spoken of Auguste Victoria's little unpleasantnesses with Princess Henry and the Hereditary Princess of Meiningen. With the latter, a sprightly and pretty woman,

having a record for frivolity and a tongue as sharp as a needle, the Empress would fain live in peace, if Her Royal Highness was half willing, but Charlotte is like one of those proud stags who would rather fight than eat; to coin epigrams on her sister's weaknesses and little vanities gives her far more pleasure than to revel in Her Majesty's good graces and be loaded with favors,—“such as they are,” I might add, in “Lottchen's” own language. For years the two women have made war upon each other. It pleased Her Majesty to acquaint the Kaiser with all the gossip, new and old, she heard about her sister-in-law, and the latter retaliated by making Auguste Victoria ridiculous. Once (the church-building craze, inaugurated by the Kaiserin, was just then at its height, and the two ladies were driving together in Friedrich Strasse) their carriage was stopped by a break-down on the road. An old man, standing near, recognized Her Majesty, and politely uncovered, holding his hat in his outstretched hand, while making a low obeisance. This loyal subject happened to be extremely bald. “See here, old cock,” cried a *gamin* observing the scene, “cover up that vacant lot, or the Kaiserin will build a church on it, sure as you live.” The Empress was furious, but Charlotte laughed right out. “I beg of you not to repeat this impertinent remark to ‘Willie,’” said the Empress, earnestly.

“Of course not. I am not your Brockdorff or Keller.”

But the same evening His Majesty told the story to some officers of the Queen's Dragoons, at whose mess he supped.

Some time after that, there was a *fête* at the Villa Meiningen, to which many young officers of the Kaiser Franz regiment were commanded, and when all had dined and drunk well, Princess Charlotte proposed *Zettelschreiben*; that is, a game played as follows: all participants sit around a table, armed with pencil and paper. At a given signal each

writes down the name of some society man, after which the space written on is folded over and the sheet handed to the person opposite, who returns his or her sheet. Next the name of a lady is put down, the sheets being handled as before. At the third signal all persons write down the intentions of the unknown gentleman on top with respect to the unknown lady below. Then the cards or sheets are thrown into a bowl from which they are drawn one after another and read aloud.

By lot the Hereditary Prince was selected to read off the *Zettel*, and did so with good humor, giving some choice specimens of pornographist writings without paying the least attention to the presence of his wife and the latter's *Hofdamen*, Madame von Brochen and Madame von Berger; but suddenly coming across the name Plüskow, he stopped.

Captain von Plüskow, of the First Guards, the tallest and best-looking officer in the German army, passed for Her Royal Highness's lover at one time: he was, I believe, the predecessor of Colonel von Plessen, the latter now one of His Majesty's adjutants.

"Captain von Plüskow," repeated the Prince—"Plüskow and Charlotte Meiningen: 'the chimera that one tries to keep for one's self, what is only a half, calls for my compassion.'"

Here His Highness broke off. "Well said," he remarked, looking sharply at his wife; "I suppose I am the person to be pitied, but the *mot* hardly bears out the purpose of the game."

Her Royal Highness clapped her hands with merriment. "A funny coincidence," she cried, "very funny, but go on; besides that of a philosophical nature, I expressed some other sentiments on that *Zettel*."

"Yes, yes," pleaded the company, "Your Highness must proceed; we insist."



"Very well," shouted Prince Bernhardt; "but if any of you young fellows become contaminated, I won't answer to your mammas." Then he cleared his throat, and was about to commence reading, when his eyes opened wider and wider. His lips rehearsed the sentence before him, but did not voice it. "*Nein, nein,*" he said; "*es ist zu schwein'sch; so was kann nur mein 'Lottchen' schreiben.*" ("No, no; it's too dirty; only my 'Lottchen' could write down a thing like that.") With this, and shaking with laughter, he handed the paper to Madame von Brochen, enjoining her to throw it into the fire after perusal. Needless to say, the command was not obeyed.

No one expects to hear of prayer-meetings or of lectures *à la Gräfin Hahn-Hahn*<sup>1</sup> from Villa Meiningen, but this incident really exceeded the license permitted the frivolous daughter of an Emperor. Coming on top of the newsboy's joke which Her Royal Highness had popularized, Auguste Victoria seized the opportunity for taking an unusually firm stand. Too timid to grapple with the Hereditary Princess herself, she sent word, by Baron Mirbach, that Madame von Berger would no longer be received at Court. There followed an angry reply by Charlotte, who sarcastically asked if this decree of banishment was enacted for the same reasons that "prompted the Empress Frederick to exclude Countess Brockdorff from her circle." Then the Kaiser and Prince Bernhardt had another falling out; the latter resigned from the army and, with his wife, went to live in Athens.

Nowadays the relations between the two ladies are quite amicable, and for a very good reason: the Princess having

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<sup>1</sup> A German Catholic writer, who, after sending a lot of licentious books into the world, turned a complete somersault, and, after buying back her first novels, produced fiction of the most pious character.

removed to Breslau, they never see each other, except at stated festive occasions, when opportunities for quarrels are few and far between. The same applies to the rest of the Kaiser's sisters, all of whom suffered the Empress's intermittent displeasure before their husbands carried them off. At present there is but one Prussian Princess living at Court,—the widow of the Red Prince, Her Royal Highness Marie, *née* Princess of Anhalt.

She is a *grande dame* of noble carriage, a kindly and altogether lovely woman, who, despite poverty, keeps up a dignified state.

Like the Empress Frederick, her old-time rival in the affections of King and Emperor William I, this royal lady is cursed with a son who is a complete egoist. Her late husband, the brutal and churlish Frederick Charles, who never relaxed the grasp of his riding-whip at home, had no sooner closed his drunken eyes, than his heir, Frederick Leopold, kicked his mother out of his castles: the palace on Wilhelm's Platz and the country-seats Glienecke, Dreilinden, etc. This boy, scarcely of age, had no room for his parent. Every roof and every foot of his immense landed possessions he needed for his overgrown self.

There were family meetings and notes of protest from all royal relatives of Europe; Frederick Leopold could neither be bullied nor wheedled. He stood on his rights, and defied the Emperor himself. So His Majesty finally had to patch up the ugly old Albrecht Palace, on Leipziger Platz, for her, where Princess Marie now lives, attended by a single *Hofdame*, Countess Pückler, and Baron von Wangenheim, who has been her gentleman of the bed-chamber in name and, it is said, in fact for many years,—even long before Frederick Charles died.

There is a rumor that Her Royal Highness's relations to the Baron were legalized by a marriage enacted before

the Minister of the Royal House, *Herr* von Wedel, but I have never been able to verify this statement, which is guarded like a state secret. The fact that the Emperor's and Empress's invitations to the Princess now always include *Herr* von Wangenheim seems to indicate that the couple is at last united.

In former years, that is, up to 1894, when the Kaiserin and her sister, Princess Frederick Leopold, were on friendly terms, Auguste Victoria used to take sides with her brother-in-law against the widowed Princess; but now that she and Sophie Louise hardly speak, Her Majesty gives her dislike to Baron Wangenheim as an excuse for neglecting her amiable grandaunt. Some little time before Frederick Leopold's wedding, the Kaiser mentioned to Her Majesty that, in a month or so, Aunt Marie would be without a roof over her head. "She is of opinion that I have to provide her with a suitable home," he said.

"Is it possible?" The Empress, who always acts as if she had never known poverty, raised her eyes in astonishment. "Perhaps she aspires to Babelsberg or Charlottenburg, or perhaps she wants me to give up the Marble Palace for her accommodation."

"Calm yourself," replied the Emperor; "I have already decided what to do. I told her she could have rooms at Brühl."

"Brühl?" queried the Empress; "where is that?"

This ignorance vexed William. "In South-west Africa, near Klein-Popo," he said, brusquely, and left Her Majesty and her ladies blushing.

So poor Princess Marie had to move with her little Court to the tumble-down palace between Bonn and Cologne, while dozens of well-kept castles stand empty in the neighborhood of the capital. Brühl, once a residence of the Electoral Princes of Cologne, was last overhauled in

1847; the reader may imagine the state the old pile is in. The Kaiser ordered that his aunt should have the use of ten rooms, besides servants' quarters. A corresponding amount of furniture, bedding, silver, and linen was also placed at her disposal; but every time she needed something extra, the Seneschal, Baron von Solemacher-Antweiler, acted like a madman. He dared not refuse Her Royal Highness, and at the same time feared to go against his orders. And such society for the widow of the proudest princely warrior of the times! The *Frau Bürgermeister*, the *Frau Pfarrer*, the *Frau Amtmann*, the *Frau* What's-her-husband-doing.

One afternoon, when the Princess entertained these dames, a *Frau Sürmond* naïvely asked: "But, Your Royal Highness, why did you come down to this lonely chateau? It must be very annoying to a lady who has lived in the great world all her life to put up with such poor company as we are, and with such comforts, or rather discomforts, as this castle offers."

"My dear woman," answered Princess Marie, raising herself proudly, "I am penniless and homeless, truths you may be unable, or perhaps unwilling, to believe. But that makes them none the less onerous, I assure you. You say: 'You have a son, the richest prince in the empire.' Ah, yes; but my Leopold is not an agreeable man. He is hard-hearted, and he wishes me dead every day in the year."

"There was not a tremor in the voice of that proud old woman as she spoke these damning words," said one of the ladies afterward. "We all felt that the meanness of her surroundings and of the person to whom she gave life does not soil her skirts even. Her Royal Highness seems to be above petty things and above great, heart-burning sorrows too."

The Princess put up with Brühl for two or three seasons; then she wrote to His Majesty, declining to use his ten rooms any longer.

Still worse was their Imperial Majesties' treatment of Princess Marie during the severe illness of the Hereditary Grand Duchess of Oldenburg (who died in 1895). Princess Elizabeth, who was the older sister of the Duchess of Connaught and Princess Frederick Charles's second daughter, fell dangerously ill in June, 1890, while attending the christening of little Victoria<sup>1</sup> in Potsdam, and her case was diagnosed as acute inflammation of the bowels, making an indefinite stay imperative. Princess Frederick Charles came day after day from Berlin to nurse her daughter, and repeatedly complained to the Empress that this journeying to and fro in the heat of the summer was killing her, an old woman. At one of these conversations, the House-marshal, Baron von Lyncker, happened to be present, and when conducting Her Majesty to her carriage, this official asked if she had any orders respecting Her Royal Highness. The Kaiserin looked annoyed, and answered: "No."

In the beginning of July, Princess Frederick Charles was in a state approaching nervous prostration, and her physicians told her that she must either go and live in Potsdam or go to some other country-place; those fatiguing trips had to stop at once. Again Her Royal Highness submitted the case to her imperial niece, and a third time Her Majesty expressed merely vague regrets.

Next day the Princess was carried off to Woerlitz by order of the Duke, her brother, who had been informed of Her Royal Highness's precarious condition.

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<sup>1</sup> Victoria, eldest daughter of Prince and Princess Frederick Leopold of Prussia.

"I tremble lest the world may condemn me," she wrote to her sick daughter a few days afterward—"you, my dear, in sorest need of a mother's care, and I seemingly enjoying myself at this ever jolly Court. But what could I do? His Majesty would not offer me a bed at your present home, though, I understand, one hundred and fifty of the chambers in the Stadt Schloss are unoccupied. Needless to say, your brother Leopold likewise refused to understand my situation. Does this boy ask his mother to go down on her knees before him to obtain leave to stay at one of his castles that, by right, should be mine as long as I live?"

Such brutality seems almost incredible, but Court-marshal Eulenburg offered a very lucid explanation. "If Her Royal Highness had been lodged at the Stadt Schloss, it would have been necessary to give accommodations to her *Hofdame* and to two or three maids at the very least. That," said the Count, "meant the feeding of four or five persons, which we could ill afford."

There may have been another reason, besides. As the Frederick Leopolds were living at the Stadt Schloss (their country-seat Glienecke being in course of reconstruction), it would have been the proper thing to tender to the old Princess the use of Her Majesty's rooms; but, though there was every probability that Aunt Marie would decline the offer, the very thought prodded the Emperor and Empress to the verge of indelicacy.

Sophie Louise herself asked her sister many times to allow her to spend the last months of her pregnancy at the Marble Palace or Babelsberg, both castles standing idle. "The military exercises under my windows in this place<sup>1</sup> threaten to drive me mad," said Her Royal Highness.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Lustgarten* in front of the Stadt Schloss is used as a drill-ground.

"You ought to understand that what I need most in my present excitable condition is rest and repose. *You*, who always have your children in the quietude of the Marble Palace, should appreciate my plight better than anybody."

But pleading was of no avail. Sophie Louise had to hold out in the heat and dust and noise of the Stadt Schloss.

Her Majesty's relations to the women of other reigning families are no more cordial, though less fluctuating, than those to her sister and sisters-in-law. Years ago she was intimate with the Queen of Italy, but the betrothal of the Prince of Naples to Helene of Montenegro caused a breach that subsequent *entrevues* failed to heal. The Kaiserin did try, and tried hard, to gain the friendship of the Czarina; but her partisanship for the "fighting Grand Duchess," as Victoria of Hesse-Darmstadt is called in Court circles, undid all her efforts to appear gracious and obliging to the younger and prettier cousin.

In the conjugal imbroglio, Alexandra Feodorovna has supported her brother from the start. The Grand Duchess's continued obstinacy and incompatibility of temper, she thinks, would have ceased long ago if the Kaiserin did not uphold the little spitting fire.

Maybe my mistress is guilty of the offence charged; yet it is safe to assume that she acts out of sympathy with the young wife's peculiar position rather than because she dislikes the Grand Duke, or believes in opposing a husband's authority.

As for Victoria, she probably inherited her fighting qualities from her parents. Edinburgh, now Duke of Saxe-Coburg, is known all the world over as a most disagreeable man, and the reputation of his wife, Duchess Marie, a sister of the late Alexander III, is far from sanctity. For a long time, in the years 1879, 1880, 1881,

1882, and part of 1883, the couple were not on speaking terms, and each slept in his or her little bed. Finally, they patched up their quarrel for the time being, and Beatrice, the only remaining unmarried daughter, was the result. Is it strange that the offspring of such a union should be a shrew?

But that is not Ernest Louis's chief point of complaint. The first and principal reason for the august couple's quarrels is the want of a son. Victoria has so far given birth to a daughter only, and, as usual in such cases, the father blamed her for the child's sex, and, later on, for lack of fecundity. Now the Empress experienced rows of that kind in her own family. Her sister Calma—this is the Duchess of Glücksburg's nickname at home—had four daughters in quick succession, and every time a girl arrived at the old chateau of Grünholz her husband walked out of the house and kept away for many weeks, living meanwhile at cheap inns or with his forester, the only one he can afford. Lasting peace was established only after the birth of their fifth child, Prince Frederick. Having proved to the world that he can make a boy, the Duke forgave his wife for her daughters.

That, under the circumstances, the Kaiserin and Victoria of Hesse should be united by sympathy is but natural. In Her Majesty's own words: "All royal women should stand together to repudiate the claims of their husbands for sons. We will bear sons, God willing, but to try and intimidate us into fulfilling expectations of male issue is a barbarism that cannot be too strenuously opposed."

Duchess Calma, by the way, is the best-looking of the four Augustenburg sisters,—a very pretty woman with large blue eyes, a marvelously fine complexion of pink and white, and luxurious blonde hair. With all her child-bearing, she has retained a figure at once lithe and voluptuous.



Up to a few years ago the Glücksburgs were piteously poor, but of late have gained an unincumbered income of fifteen thousand marks per year by inheritance. On this they manage to keep a Court-marshal and a lady-in-waiting, *Herr* and *Frau* von der Recke, and an English governess, Miss Judson. Duchess Calma often stays with us during the Kaiser's long absences, and is kind and approachable, though painfully embarrassed with strangers. She has had very little education, and is not naturally bright. The same may be said of her husband, Duke Frederick, who is really little more than a good-natured dunce, subject to fits of disagreeableness. To exemplify the penury prevailing in the ducal *ménage*, I need but mention, that, when His Highness was invited to the Neues Palais in June, 1891, to fetch away his wife and little girls, he sent his regrets, excusing himself with having nothing to wear.

"The Kaiser's order, that all visiting Princes must appear in uniform," he wrote, "makes it impossible for me to comply with Your Majesty's gracious request. My uniform coat and *attila* are still in good condition, but my breeches are sadly in need of new silver braid, and I cannot afford to have them done up this year." The Duke is an officer *à la suite* of the Fourteenth Hussars.

The couple has lovely children, only a little too ethereal are these thin-limbed, narrow-chested youngsters. I have often heard them crying with hunger in the nursery, and once spoke to the Duchess about it.

"Ah," said Her Highness, "they get more here than at home. I leave it entirely to Miss Judson. When I remonstrate with her about underfeeding my little girls, she makes answer: 'I want them to be fine and English looking, not like fat German children. Those are detestable.'"

So this senseless mother, who mistrusts her own judgment in all things, allows her poor youngsters to be half starved

that a spleeny governess may have her way. To see these little Highnesses stealthily munch bread and sausage, the gift of good-hearted chamber-women and lackeys,—for they beg food of every one they catch hold of,—is one of the parodies on royalty encountered in the German Emperor's palace.

Duchess Calma and Princess Feo, the latter the youngest of the Augustenburg sisters, get most of Her Majesty's left-off dresses, state gowns as well as house and carriage toilets, all of which should go by right to the *Kammerfrau* and the ladies of the Court. Such, at least, is the custom in other royal establishments, the discarded toilets, most of them worn only once or twice, being regarded as the just perquisites of persons holding certain positions. However, when poor relatives are around, one's complimentary dues are of little account. For my part, I think Her Majesty would be less extravagant if it was not for the fact that she feels in honor bound to allow *Frau* von Haake and the Countesses Keller and Bassewitz, as well as her wardrobe-women, to occasionally choose among her less expensive old things. The funny part of it is that, according to an old-established rule, dresses given away by Her Majesty must not be worn in the palace. The dames of the Court therefore sell these garments. Not so the royal sisters. They frequently wear Her Majesty's dresses unaltered,—only shortened, made tighter, or expanded as the case demands. These alterations are made in Her Majesty's own tailor-shop, where models of their Highnesses' figures are kept, so that Calma and Feo have nothing to do but slip into a new gown as often as they like.

Princess Feo, now in her twenty-fourth year, is not a pretty girl. Unlike her other sisters, she is dark, and her face is disfigured by an uncommonly large nose. Her complexion is bad, and she looks prematurely old. Oh,

the time Her Majesty has trying to get a rich husband for this Cinderella among Lutheran Princesses! As narrated, she set out to capture the Prince of Naples for Feo, and her visits to the Quirinal and to the Pope were chiefly undertaken to smooth the way for her sister's happiness. The Savoy-Montenegro betrothal knocked all the Empress's plans into a cocked hat, and the Kaiser was so angry with poor innocent Feo that he refused to see her ever afterward.

Similar misfortune attended, for many years, Her Majesty's efforts to get her brother Günther settled. She dearly loves this good-hearted but wild *bon vivant*, whose sins against propriety she shielded more than once with her own royal person when Günther held forth in the Palais Pourtales and the air was thick with rumors of orgies held at that doubtful establishment.

At such times Her Majesty used to invite herself to breakfast at Günther's, and the announcement, duly published in the newspapers, had a tendency to stop the tongues of irreverent babblers. Surely, Her Majesty would not visit a house where dancing-girls are served for dessert on shell platters, swimming in a sauce of *eau de Cologne*, and where champagne is drunk out of slippers! Of course not! But it was rather a surprise for the royal lady to find a pair of pink corsets under a sofa cushion, inadvertently pushed aside when she was about to take the seat of honor at *dejeuner*.

The Kaiserin introduced her brother successively to two should-be brides,—the Princess Elizabeth of Mecklenburg, now married to the Hereditary Grand Duke of Oldenburg; and to that young woman's cousin, Jutta of Strelitz. The first proved "too colossal" for Günther's refined taste, and the latter too poor. Jutta, the second daughter of the Hereditary Grand Duke, was a very beautiful girl at the

time when the negotiations were pending, and her mother told me she was rather glad that the project failed, Günther being, after all, but a paltry Duke. "My daughter," said Her Highness, "will marry a *King*."

Poor Jutta! she started out in the wrong way to accomplish so noble a purpose. In the fall of 1897, her father brought her to Professor Ohlshausen, in Berlin, giving an assumed name in order to shield his rank. He said his daughter had had some strange sensations of late, and that he desired her to be thoroughly examined.

The doctor did as he was told, and after a quarter of an hour reappeared, his face wreathed in professional smiles. "I congratulate you, *Herr* Baron," he said; "if everything goes well, you will be a grandfather in about four months."

The father of Jutta's baby is a footman, named Hecht, employed at the Neu Strelitz Palace for some fifteen years. The Hereditary Grand Duke nearly killed the old scoundrel, and then sent Jutta to Italy to be confined, but with her expectations of queenship, I am afraid, it is all up.

Prospective wife number three, proposed by Her Majesty, was "little Mary" of Edinburgh, now the Princess Royal of Roumania. She visited at the Neues Palais with her mother and three sisters in June, 1892, and His Highness was enchanted with her *ingénue* ways and her beauty. Naturally, he thought she could be had for the asking by a man like him, whom the Emperor was backing, but "right here Albert Edward got in his fine work," as Günther expressed it. The Prince of Wales met the proposal by a categorical "No," and that ended the matter.

Finally, in the spring of 1897, Günther engaged himself to the only daughter of Philip of Coburg, Princess Dorothy, then a little over fifteen years of age. "She looks like a school miss, so innocent and petite," reported

the Berlin President of Police, Baron von Windheim, to Her Majesty. He had seen the young lady at a dinner given in her and Duke Günther's honor by our Paris Ambassador, in May last. Others who attended the banquet say the Jewish blood of the Koharys is perceptible in her features, and to no great advantage, either.

While Count Münster's guests were listening to a concert, Princess Dorothy was rolling on the floor with a couple of big hounds, displaying her fine hosiery and snowy linen.

## CHAPTER X

The Emperor hates family ties ; he is always at war with his mother, sometimes with Prince Henry and his sisters Charlotte and Sophie, and looks upon the rest of his relatives with supreme indifference, as a big Newfoundland does upon the small fry of the canine race. And as that seemingly good-natured but *au fond* knavish quadruped allows pretty toy dogs to play with him and pull him about, so does the Kaiser engage in familiar intercourse, off and on, with Duchess Calma, with Her Highness's children, Duke Günther, and brother-in-law Adolph of Lippe ; but as to Her Majesty's mother and Princess Feo, he loathes them, the first because she is "*meschugge*," as he expresses himself in the Berlin vernacular, and the other because of her presumptiveness.

In former years, Princess Feo visited at the palace during the Kaiser's presence there, but now he keeps both her and her mother at a distance when at home. To the Duchess Adelaide His Majesty has been at home only on two occasions,—at the wedding of her third daughter, Louise Sophie, to Prince Frederick Leopold, and after Her Royal Highness's first confinement, in 1890. Frederick Leopold, by the way, has never permitted the Duchess to cross the threshold of Klein-Glienecke. This amiable son-in-law divides womanhood into classes. When Countess Fritz was hand and glove with the Emperor, he designated her *the* woman of the first class ; his wife, who is not pretty,

and dresses in execrable taste, he calls a woman of the second class; of his wife's ladies, Grand-mistress Countess Konigsmarck, *Mademoiselle* von Wurmb, and *Mademoiselle* von Oertzen, he speaks as third-class females, if he does not collectively call them his harem. "Louise's mother," he says, "belongs to the seventh class,—*die böse Sieben*."

The Duchess and Princess Feo live in Reichenbach Strasse, Dresden; a Colonel von Schlanberg is their Court-marshal, and a *Fräulein* von Roeder acts as *Hofdame*. The Colonel's chief duty is to repudiate extravagant contracts made by Her Highness with purveyors and other people. Once he found the house swarming with servants clad in all sorts of liveries, new, old, and in tatters. Twenty-five stalwart men lined the staircase from vestibule to the top of the house.

"What does this mean?" inquired the Major-domo.

"Her Highness escaped yesterday when on a visit to Countess X. Y., hired a *Droschke*, and drove to all the employment agencies, where she engaged the best-looking fellows she could find. Forty have so far reported, and were sent into the saddle-room, there to pick up what they might in the way of liveries."

"But what are those fellows doing on the stairs?" demanded the Colonel.

"They are placed there by Her Highness's special orders. She expects to receive a Court train from Her Majesty to-day, and proposes to sweep down in great gala when dressed up."

This escapade cost the ducal *ménage* some thousands of marks, for the people had all been regularly engaged by the year, and were consequently entitled to compensation for wages and board-money.

The *contretemps* happened just before Christmas, 1892, when the Duchess had asked the Kaiserin for a mantle of

purple velvet, embroidered in the arms of the Holsteins and the Hohenlohes. As a general thing, the Empress is exceedingly kind to her mother, but she refused this request point blank. "If Her Highness owned such a garment, she might take it into her head to surprise us at some state function, asking to be allowed to participate in the procession," she said to Countess Brockdorff. "I cannot entertain this demand, much as I would like to oblige my mother. The Emperor would never forgive me."

Her Highness annually spends from two to three months at the Neues Palais or Schloss. She comes for one, two, or three weeks at a time, and stays as long as her condition permits. Her peculiar dementia is the wash craze, not a craze for cleanliness,—for she would as soon jump into the fire as immerse herself in a tub of water,—but a passion for washing herself, for engaging in the physical exertion of wetting different parts of her body and rubbing them down.

"I have brought my daily ablutions into a system," she told me as long as eight or nine years ago, with glowing eyes, "and to that end divided my body into twenty-one hemispheres" (meaning sections). "The cleansing of each one of them requires a complete toilet-set,—bowl, pitcher, soap-dish, and towel."

That is one of the reasons why Her Highness's visits are so much dreaded in the palace. I have already spoken about the inadequacy of the supply of certain requisites at our Court. Now imagine one guest of perhaps a dozen or more demanding half a store full of toilet-sets for her use alone. Our Court-marshal groans and the House-marshals and chamber-maids swear when the Duchess of Schleswig is announced. Baron Lyncker and *Herr* von Egloffstein have to "find" the *lavoirs*; that is, they must borrow what is needed from the royal porcelain factory, and the girls have to provide the oceans of water.



one-third of the prescribed number "was noticeable by its absence," as the Germans say.

Duchess Adelaide clutched at her hair. "Whose work is this?" she cried; "I have had twenty-one bowls and pitchers as long as I can think, and my daughter would be the last person in the world to deprive me of comfort. Who took the *lavoirs* away?" and she was about to throw herself upon the maids, who were ready to prepare her for bed. At that moment a happy thought occurred to Roeder. "The Schloss is full to overflowing with royalties, as Your Highness knows," she said; "probably the Court-marshal, running short of stock, took some of our china away."

Curiously enough, *Madame Mère* accepted this explanation, and promised to behave, if her four maids, *Fräulein* von Roeder, her daughter Feo, and the maid of the Princess would lend their *lavoirs* for the night. Next morning she ordered two landaus from the *Marshall*, and sent her *Hofdame* and her dresser to town to buy more toilet-sets.

"If my son-in-law," she said, "is too poor to provide for his guests, they must try and augment the shortcomings of his *ménage*," adding, disgustedly: "and *that* calls himself an Emperor!"

"As Her Highness pronounced these words, she threw her sponge into bowl number eleven," reports Roeder, who also volunteers some interesting information respecting the section of the Duchess's anatomy labelled XI.

The *lavoirs* purchased, seven of them, were smuggled into Her Highness's apartment in paper boxes to hoodwink the servants, and were then placed in Princess Feo's and *Fräulein* von Roeder's rooms, so the Empress might not see them when she paid her daily visits to *Madame Mère*.

Duchess Adelaide indulges in the wash craze twice daily, before second breakfast and after supper; sometimes, on her "critical days," she rises as early as half-past four to commence operations. When staying with us at the Neues Palais in the fall of 1893, the mania seized her one fine morning at 5 A.M. She jumped out of bed and, without taking time to put on even a petticoat, ran into the corridor, shouting for the girls to bring water. The noise awoke Princess Feo and *Fräulein* von Roeder, who endeavored to persuade Her Highness to come back to bed, but the old woman turned upon them with a flood of invectives that would have done honor to a fish-wife. When, finally, the overseer of the corridor arrived, he found three half-naked women engaged in a fierce battle, the two younger ones trying to force the other to re-enter the apartment, while she clamored for hot water at the top of her voice. "Water, water, I am dying for water! Only nine pitchers are filled! Give me twelve pitchers of hot water!"

In the Empress's room conversation once turned upon the subject of complexions. "To what, do you think, does Feo ascribe her muddled skin?" asked the Duchess in her usual blunt manner, and all of us began to look sharply to our needle-work. Her Highness repeated the question, and then answered it herself: "Because," she grinned—" *nota bene*, that is Feo's explanation—because I won't let her sleep at night, and awaken her early in the morning. Now I should like to know whether I am not entitled to my daughter's company while engaged in my toilet? Roeder and the girls have to sit up while I wash, but Feo is allowed to go to bed, or remain abed, where I visit her from time to time for a snatch of talk. I mean to entertain her, as well as myself, and this ungrateful child says I am muddling her complexion."

Physicians have diagnosed Her Highness's craze as a morbid craving to smooth down certain nerve centres which are subject to periodical irritation. The rubbings and ablutions seem to soothe them into a restful condition. When all the twenty-one "hemispheres" have been attended to, Her Highness feels quite well until the second wash act is about due. "But the worst of it is," says Colonel von Schlanberg, accountant of the ducal finances, "Her Highness uses almost as great a quantity of toilet vinegars and other preparations as water. Last year her bills for soap and cosmetics and the like exceeded Princess Feo's dress-making and millinery accounts, though all the stuffs are bought *en gros*."

If for some physical or mental reasons the ablutions fail to quiet Her Highness, she has paroxysms of rage that seriously threaten her surroundings. Then she smashes furniture, howls like mad, and falls upon her maids if she gets the chance. As a rule, though, her girls are selected with a view to bodily strength, and it has been asserted that they give tit for tat whenever their mistress essays to throttle or otherwise maltreat them. It would not be the first time that a royal lunatic was subjected to violence. George III of England was soundly thrashed by his valet, whenever, during his intermittent fits of lunacy, the latter got a chance to even up things. For every fisticuff the man had got when his master was in seeming possession of his senses, he kicked George thrice when the latter was strait-jacketed. Such is human nature.

In the spring of 1894 Her Highness brought in her retinue two newly-engaged maids; they were to do night service for the first time at the Neues Palais, while another set had to attend Her Highness's morning wash. Whether these girls had not been properly prepared for the ordeal awaiting them, or, lacking instructions, performed their

work badly, or whether they were timid by nature, I do not know; at any rate, there was an awful rumpus toward twelve o'clock in the part of the palace where the Duchess lodged, and next morning it was learned that the girls had run from the building, never stopping until commanded to do so on pain of death by the sentinels in the *Sandhof*. Then they threw themselves upon their knees, and screamed for mercy. The poor creatures thought they were in a Bedlam: the royal lady, their mistress, finding herself short one pitcher of water, had suddenly metamorphosed into a fiend incarnate, had assailed them with biting and scratching and throttling, and now that they had gained the open, two shining barrels were pushed into their faces, with the command: "Stand still, or I will shoot!" This episode meant another onslaught on poor Colonel von Schlanberg's slender treasury.

When the Kaiser heard of this scandal, he placed his mother-in-law in an asylum at Gratz, where she was kept for four or five months; then they discharged her as incurable. The managers did not care to keep the Duchess, particularly as she backed up every unreasonable demand of hers by a threat to commit suicide and ruin the institution. Her *Hofdame*, *Fräulein* von Roeder, alone knew how to manage her when in the mood for self-destruction. She is a very energetic woman, strong-minded and strong-limbed, and capable of enforcing His Majesty's orders at all hazards. Once when Duchess Adelaide expressed a desire to have her groom in the parlor, Roeder replied with her usual "No, thank you."

"But I will have Johann in the *salon*, or anywhere else, if I see fit. Am I not the Duchess of Schleswig-Holstein?"

"I know," answered Roeder, doggedly, "but that notwithstanding, Your Highness will not entertain a hostler here,—not till the Mur runs up the Schlossberg."

"You impertinent cat!" cried the Duchess. "You think you can give me the end of your tongue because that son-in-law of mine, the Emperor, encourages you." At the same time she carried a chair to the window, opened it, and placing one foot on the sill, added: "*Now* will you let me have Johann?"

"Why *now*?" asked Roeder, innocently.

"Because, unless you ring for him at once, I will jump out."

Roeder never quivered. Nonchalantly waving her hand toward the window, she said: "Jump, Your Highness, and I will enjoy a long holiday. I will have my salary for life, you know." Her Highness did jump, but onto the floor. "Damn you," she hissed, "I would rather live forever than do you a good turn!"

Besides water, soap, and toilet vinegars, the unhappy Duchess—a lady of sixty-three, by the way—has men on the brain. Her former cavalier, now Court-marshal to Duke Günther, *Herr* von Gutzmerow, had to be removed from her presence because he wished to remain constant to his wife. Shortly after Colonel von Schlanberg's appointment, the Duchess came to Potsdam to exhibit "her new treasure," as she called him. Schlanberg is not an Adonis, and considerable time has passed since he celebrated his fiftieth birthday; but that notwithstanding, Her Highness tried her level best to compromise herself and him. She was forever talking of the Colonel, casting longing glances at his manly form, and persecuted the old warrior with little attentions that made us all blush. One afternoon, at the Neues Palais, she ordered him to follow her for a stroll in the park, and, going ahead, took the carriage road, newly laid with loose yellow sand. As she proceeded, she raised her skirts higher and higher, looking around every few seconds to watch the impression her

royal calves made on the Colonel. The gentleman was in despair. There was a sentinel walking up and down in front of the palace, and half a dozen servants lounged about the terrace, while Her Majesty and suite stood at the windows of the billiard-room. "Your Highness," he was heard to cry, "you are exerting yourself unnecessarily. If you will but step a little to the right, you will find a hard road."

Instead of following this advice, the Duchess rustled her skirts and giggled. Now the Colonel sprang to her side. "May I offer you my arm?"

"The privilege is granted, *von ganzem Herzen*," lisped Duchess Adelaide, sweetly; "don't you think I have a mighty good figure for an old one?"

As the Duchess, on the two state occasions mentioned, made unspeakable assaults upon her male neighbors at table, she is now excluded from the royal board. She dines *à deux* with her *Hofdame*, unless the Kaiserin admits her to second breakfast, or supper, when only a few good friends, or no gentlemen at all, are present. Then she sits between Her Majesty and Countess Brockdorff, or Countess Eulenburg, who make her behave by alternately keeping one hand on her knee to remind her of bodily restraint; but even then she breaks loose at times, smashes the table with her fist that the plates and glasses dance about, and swears like a trooper. One of her favorite expressions is: "*der verfluchte Schweinehund*," and she applies it indiscriminately to Pope or Kaiser, hostler or Court-marshal. Of women, she usually speaks as "*die alte Hure*." Even the Duchess of Orleans was more polite. She never went further than to call Madame Montespan "*die alte Zottel*."

At the same time the Duchess is capable of treating persons of the serving-classes with the utmost deference. Once,

while Her Majesty was in her room at the Stadt Schloß, the *friseuse*, *Frau* Moeller, came to dress Her Highness's hair. The Duchess at once jumped up. "My dear," she said, kissing the astonished woman on both cheeks and fondling her, "I am so glad you have come. I believe I had the honor of meeting you at the Empress Eugenie's in Paris before those confounded Prussians drove her from her throne as they did my husband."

The Empress did not know what to do. "Mother," she cried, "this is my wardrobe-woman, not the Princess you imagine her to be, though I admit the likeness is striking." The Duchess would not listen. She walked at Moeller's side, bowing and scraping and uttering the most highfaluting language imaginable, until, finally, Auguste Victoria, taking her mother by the shoulders, fairly threw her into a *fauteuil* and rolled this to the toilet-table, where Moeller, without a word, commenced her work.

Her Highness's dementia antedates her husband's death, which occurred in the beginning of 1880. Stories that she was queer had found their way to Berlin years before, and when their present Majesties' betrothal was celebrated at Babelsberg, June 2, 1880, it was found necessary to exclude *Madame Mère* from the banquet. Bismarck, having refused to interfere while it was yet time, now advised that no attention whatever be paid to the matter, a decision which reminds one of the statesmanship of the advisers of the first Tudor, Henry VII. These endeavored to get the King to marry the mad Juana of Spain, even after she was incarcerated at the castle of Tordesillas, pleading that, sane or insane, she was capable of bearing children. Auguste Victoria's mother was clearly going crazy, everybody could see that; but as the prospective bride promised to be a good "Holstein," perish the thought of consequences to her offspring!

In the summer of 1886, when Her Highness was a guest of the then Princess William, at the Marble Palace, her condition first threatened to become a public scandal. I have the following from a member of the princely household.

The Duchess, it appears, had plagued her daughter so long for an opportunity to show off her skill as an Amazon that Auguste Victoria at last consented to take her riding. The hour was set for eleven o'clock next day, and Her Highness faithfully promised to get through with her washings by that time.

At eleven sharp the little cavalcade assembled before the chateau; only *Madame Mère's* Arab, which she herself had selected at the Berlin *Marstall*, remained idle. After fifteen minutes, Her Royal Highness sent word to her mother that she was waiting, a message which was repeated in stronger and stronger terms time and again. Finally, at the stroke of twelve, just as Princess William was about to canter off, they heard a mighty ado on the grand staircase,—the Duchess came rushing down. Without a word, she threw herself across her horse, one leg here, the other there, her skirt tucked up in front and behind; driving the spur into the stallion's side, she galloped off, *plain chasse*, before any one could say "*Mein Gott!*" Past the embankments of Heiligen-See, and through the woods of *Neuer Garten* raced the wild huntswoman, yelling like a Comanche, using whip and spur freely while encircling the horse's belly with her legs. At first, Princess William and her suite tried to follow, but soon gave it up as a bad job; Riding-master Hellwigh alone persisted in the chase, his long-legged hunter bringing him into hailing distance of Her Highness at Glienecke *Brücke*; but the man had no sooner opened his mouth than Duchess Adelaide recommended him to a warmer climate. She kept it up until



her horse was exhausted, and then rode back to the stables, complaining of her miserable foam and blood covered mount.

The presumption, so frequently heard, that the imperial couple and Empress Frederick cannot agree because of the latter's one-sided love of things English, is on a par with hundreds of inventions dealing with the Prussian Court of to-day,—inventions out of Mother Idleness, sired by Ignorance. As a matter of fact, the widow of the gallant Frederick is not half as prejudiced in favor of England as her enemies like to make out. If she were, why should she live in Germany, live there permanently, year in, year out?

I have known Kaiserin Victoria for twenty years and never heard her utter a word of English. She prefers to use German even in her correspondence, and, what is still more remarkable, employs the doomed German script. She patronizes German industries, loves German art, and surrounds herself with Germans. The Kaiser, on the other hand, cannot conceal his English proclivities, much as he loves to air Anglophobian views for political reasons. He seizes every opportunity for speaking and writing English, and forces his adjutants and courtiers to learn English, no matter at what age they enter his personal service. *Herr von Egloffstein* was far removed from youth when he became one of our House-marshals three or more years ago, but continues to study his *Lindley Murray* to this day.

If possible, the Empress is a more enthusiastic believer in everything English than William; the whole faculty of native midwives and nurses (not an inconsiderable body in our country) looks down upon Her Majesty as a traitress to German womanhood for employing English *accoucheuses* and nursery-maids; but she persists, braving the Charybdis of unpopularity. The imperial children learn English first and German afterward. Her Majesty

never speaks a word of German with them until they are five years old. When either of the children's birthday occurs during her absence, she sends her congratulations in English. Most of their clothes come from England, and their pony and donkey carts are made in Great Britain. Is it to be wondered at when the children indulge in such remarks as: "It would be queer if these stockings were of fast color; they are of German manufacture"? Once, when Court-chaplain Frommel admired their hosiery, the Crown Prince and Eitel Fritz expressed themselves in that surprising style.

Taking all in all, it is quite evident that the lack of sympathy between the two Empresses had its origin in other causes than those popularly assigned. Upon one I have already touched. The Crown Princess and Empress could never quite forget "that girl's impudence;" you will remember the epithets she applied to her daughter-in-law when the latter was on her first visit to the Neues Palais.

Then, as afterward, the Augustenburger was warned to mend her ways toward Her Imperial Highness. She refused to do so; she would rather make a Brockdorff her *confidante*, and invite a Waldersee to be her governess, than submit to the higher intellect of her husband's parent.

In all these years, Auguste Victoria has never loved, has sometimes fought, and has always feared her mother-in-law. There are people who assert that the similarity of their characters is one of the chief reasons for the strained relations between Kaiserin Frederick and her son. Both are too conscious of their worth and dignity, too pig-headed, too prejudiced, too much wedded to the "no surrender" policy, to come to an understanding, now that their old differences are well-nigh history.

"Knowing both her husband's and her mother-in-law's weaknesses, Auguste Victoria ought to have intermediated,

or, that failing, ought to have done her part toward bringing about and preserving amicable relations between the Neues Palais and Friedrichshof on her own account," say the true friends of the relatives-at-war. But she did nothing of the kind. In those awful days of June, 1888, when the new Kaiser, attended by the madman Normann, exploited his cruel egotism at his father's death-bed, when he made his mother and his sisters *quasi* prisoners of state until his search for an imaginary secret testament was completed (England cheated a Prussian Majesty out of an inheritance once,<sup>1</sup> why not again?)—from 9 A.M., on June 15, until after Frederick's funeral—Auguste Victoria renounced her rights of wife and mother altogether; before William's deeds of unprecedented barbarity she relinquished even her womanly feelings.

If ever wife and mother ought to have stood up for another wife and mother; if ever woman ought to have thrown the halo of womanly love around another,—that was the time! What did Auguste Victoria do? She sent expressions of the deepest regret, and said she would come to Friedrichskron as soon as her crape gown was ready.

Meanwhile, William had declared the property rights of all the people in the palace—*his* palace—forfeited for the time being; as the feudal lord of old seized a bondsman's personal estate while the body was yet warm, so had the presence of death—a father's waxen face—no restraining influence over the new master. The late Emperor's, his wife's and daughter's writing-desks, their strong boxes, trinket-boxes, bedrooms, and boudoirs, were submitted to a rigid examination before the owners were allowed access

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<sup>1</sup>The Hanoverian joint heritages, the Princess of Ahlden Allodia, about 1729. Frederick William I, at that time, challenged George II to the famous duel that never came off.

again. And in the midst of the rumpus a four-horse coach brought the new Empress!

Kaiserin Frederick had no patience to hear Auguste Victoria declaim. "Send Brockdorff away," she said, curtly. And then the proud old woman unbent enough to ask, nay, implore, her daughter-in-law to stop William's ravings. "By all that is holy to you," she is said to have exclaimed, "stop that man from desecrating my home and my noble dead. I have appealed to his love, to his sense of decency, to his manliness. It is your turn now. Talk to him with the authority of a wife and mother. He must listen to you. And unless you expect to be treated by *your* sons as I have been treated by my son during the last two hours,—restrain him, re-establish me as mistress within my own walls, and I will be forever grateful to you."

Auguste Victoria went into the library, and returned after a few moments, her face flushed and trembling. "I can do nothing," she faltered out; "'Willie' is here as Emperor, and I cannot interfere with his official business."

"Then have the goodness to go back to your Marble Palace and play with your children," cried the widowed Empress, hotly.

And the hostilities were reopened. In the interval occasioned by the new Kaiserin's reception, William had informed his mother's officials and servants that he was their master now and that they must obey no one's orders but his own. Thereupon the old Empress:

"Whoever refuses to carry out any of my commands promptly and willingly, will be instantly dismissed and forfeits his rights to pension."

Victoria had furnished her Court-marshal with a list of persons who were to be admitted to the house in order that they might have a last look at her dead hero. Only

Frederick's personal and political friends were on the list, but William tore it up, and ordered his sentinels to admit all high army officers who called.

Have ever such scenes occurred in the presence of death? The new lord's "drill-ground tenor" cutting short the impassioned speech of an outraged wife and distracted mother! Entreaties, appeals, threats, on the one side; cold indifference, scorn, sneering references to the *status quo*, on the other.

There has been no peace between the reigning Hohenzollerns and the proud Guelph mother, shorn of power, since. A resemblance of familiar intercourse was kept up as long as the Empress Augusta lived, but since her death the Kaiser's enmity to his mother has become a matter of political significance. German statesmen trim their sails according to its fluctuations, and those of Great Britain follow suit.

The Empress Frederick and Auguste Victoria had one more momentous meeting since that of June 15; namely, in the fall of the same year, when the negotiations for the Dowager Kaiserin's removal from Castle Friedrichskron were pending. The older woman strenuously opposed her son's claims to the property, first because she herself desired to retain the house where she had lived so long, and, secondly, because she feared William would ruin himself in the possession of this castle, whose vastness and splendor offer particular temptations for establishing a Court out of all proportions to the Kaiser's revenues. However, the "Augustenburger" would not see it in that light. As a matter of fact, she was as eager to branch out *à la* Versailles as her husband. After three months of widowhood, Empress Frederick left Friedrichskron. She was crying bitterly as she went through the park and halls, taking leave of everything and everybody. "Here I have spent

the most beautiful days of my married life, and afterward endured the awfulest hours woman can endure," she remarked to General von Lindequist, then commander of Potsdam. To the officials and servants, each of whom, high and low, she shook by the hand, she said: "If you ever want to see your old mistress again, you must come to Berlin, where I will make you welcome with pleasure. May palsy strike my foot if ever I thrust it over this threshold again."

As was to be expected from a woman of Her Majesty's character, she has kept her word. Occasional *quasi* enforced visits between their Majesties and Empress Frederick take place on neutral grounds. The Dowager Kaiserin receives her son and daughter-in-law in the manor-house of the farm Bornstädt, a mile or so from the Neues Palais, and next day they repair to the Marble Palace or Stadt Schloss to give Her Majesty an opportunity to return the compliment. Empress Frederick is very seldom in Berlin, and has always an excuse ready for declining invitations to official or private festivities held at her son's Court. Even when she lives Under den Linden at Christmas-time, she foregoes the pleasure of seeing the children. She has been too sorely wounded to forget and forgive. After the scenes at Frederick's death-bed, she was driven forth from her home, and this insult was quickly followed by another, aimed at her dead husband.

William and Auguste Victoria took possession of Friedrichskron in May, 1889; a few weeks later this name, which Frederick III had conferred upon the Schloss, was abolished by royal decree and the old, meaningless Neues Palais reinstated. I remember it well. All of a sudden officers of the Court-marshal's office called on the ladies and gentlemen of the Court, demanding us to hand over every scrap of stationery stamped Friedrichskron. The

confiscated stuff was burned, and we were left without writing-paper for a full week. Her Majesty herself had to write her letters on ordinary blue-lined sheets, bought in a penny store, as she would not use the official foolscap.

A third and fourth cause of chagrin to Empress Frederick was the Kaiser's treatment of his brother and sister. Prince Henry was to have had the Villa Carlotta in Sans Souci Park, which is Crown property, for a summer home, but the Kaiser gave the house and beautiful gardens to Baron von Lyncker. Next he turned the Meiningens out of their Thiergarten villa, which Emperor Frederick had rented for his daughter and son-in-law with the understanding that the Minister of the royal house pay the rent as long as the Meiningens cared to remain. William no sooner learned of this arrangement when he repudiated it. "I pay the Meiningens' rent? Not for a day, not for an hour," and the landlord was at once notified that, after the expiration of the lease, at the end of three months, he would receive no more money from the royal treasury. The Meiningens have since lived away from Berlin.

Empress Frederick's latest quarrel with her daughter-in-law dates from the summer of 1891, when Auguste Victoria decided to go to Felixstowe with her children and a suite of fifty persons, and, to secure more spending-money, authorized Court-marshal von Eulenburg to deprive the servants of their allowance of butter for first breakfast and for supper. The Kaiser's *ménage* never allows butter for second breakfast. Now it happened that the servants transferred from Empress Frederick's Court to that of the present Kaiser and Kaiserin were among the first to petition for redress. *Ergo* the cry of Empress Frederick's enemies, that "the Britisher" was at the bottom of the revolt.

"I knew nothing about these petty quarrels," said the Dowager Kaiserin, some time afterward, to Countess

Wilhelm Hohenau, "but I certainly think that this latest makeshift was most disgraceful. Depriving a servant of his butter is as bad as selling a dead man's false teeth."

Though the strong-minded English woman is noted for her outspoken criticisms, this remark, aimed directly at Auguste Victoria and coming to her ears in the quickest possible way, created first consternation and later on a demand for reprisals. Since it acquired publicity, it has become a virtue at Court to call the Empress Frederick names.

As mentioned in another place, the liberally-governed German is permitted to designate Frederick William IV an ass,—not a "confounded ass" or a "mouse-colored ass," merely an ass, no more, no less,—but with respect to black-guarding the dowager, there is no limit whatever. She is a "traitress," of course, and "hands over German state secrets to her mother every morning for breakfast." "All the English and American newspapers that make fun of the Kaiser are in her pay,"—certainly. "She tries to establish the London Sabbath in Berlin," "writes letters to Queen Louise of Denmark," and "conspires with her brother," the Prince of Wales.

But these are accusations of minor moment. Here follows the heavy artillery :

"She married off all her daughters, irrespective of their future happiness, just to get rid of them," and as to her love for Frederick, "that was all put on." Else, why was this "Seckendorff always hanging around her"? When she was in Berlin, "he was lodged in the *Prinzessinnen-Palais*, which, by a covered archway, connects with Her Majesty's *salon*, so this cavalier could go to his mistress unseen at all hours." If she was staying in Potsdam, "he had his rooms as near as possible to the Empress's." In short, "this titled John Brown attended and attends her at



all times, and is now a regular inmate of the dowager's household."

Of course he did, and of course he is. After acting as Her Majesty's private secretary for many years, His Excellency now holds the post of chamberlain and chief Court-marshal at Friedrichshof. The one position like the other, made and makes Seckendorff's presence in the sovereign lady's immediate *entourage* necessary.

"But," continue the know-alls, "the relations of the couple are of the most intimate character; they could hardly be more intimate." Fiddlesticks! I would like to see the somebody to whom a woman like the Empress Frederick has given cause for just criticism of that sort. Besides, Seckendorff is not a young man. He has seen fifty-six, and is not a person calculated to attract by any special gifts of amiability. He is of a fitful temper.

"Correct," shout the irrepressible know-alls. "When Seckendorff is mad, Her Majesty is, and when Seckendorff is jolly, the Empress tries to make everybody around her happy."

At the beginning of 1898, Empress Frederick was spoken of as a "second Marie-Louise, who had forgotten her hero-husband." It was openly asserted at the palace that she married Seckendorff. I doubt that there is anything in this story. If true, Her Majesty would make a clean breast of it, I think. She is not the woman to be swayed by prejudices or cowed by possible fault-finding.

And now let us get to the bottom of the enmity between mother and son and between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

On April 10, 1888, just one month after the reign of ninety-nine days had begun, Empress Victoria—the official designation "Empress Frederick" was conferred upon Her Majesty *after* William's accession—on that day Empress

Victoria drove from Castle Charlottenburg to the Berlin Schloss, having previously ordered Prince Bismarck to meet her. Then and there the Kaiserin informed the Chancellor that Frederick had decided not to leave her (in the event of his death) to the tender mercies of her son.

"Cherishing no illusions with respect to William's sense of justice, or to his *chevaleresque* qualities," said Her Majesty, "the Emperor orders that seventy-five per cent. of my portion, as well as the dowries of my unmarried daughters and all my daughters' shares in our property, be paid by the Crown treasury now, while the rest is to be held at our disposal, to be paid over the moment my husband dies, and before the new Emperor assumes control of the funds and revenues."

Bismarck was dumfounded.

"Here are the Kaiser's orders, signed and countersigned and sealed. And," added the Empress, "His Majesty enjoins Your Grace and all the persons taking official cognizance of this act to the greatest secrecy. I have your word, Prince?"

"You have, Your Majesty."

Of this arrangement William never heard a breath until the morning of June 15.

Those who followed the events preceding Bismarck's dismissal will remember that the Chancellor, before submitting to the Kaiser's request for his resignation, went to the Empress Frederick to ask her intercession. At that momentous interview he reminded Her Majesty of the service rendered her two years before. But the Empress merely shook her head: "It is *that* which stands forever between me and my son."





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